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See page 52.

FRONTISPIECE.

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PLEASANT PASTIME;

or,

Drawing-room Draman,

FOR

PRIVATE REPRESENTATION BY THE YOUNG.

"Scenic representations certainly form the most forcible and natural means of awakening attention, and giving distinctness to memory; and, therefore, when managed in a suitable manner, they would be divested of danger, and rendered most available towards the advancement of education."—The Use of the Body in Relation to the Mind. By Dr. Moobs.

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PREFACE.

IMPERSONATION has ever been the favourite pastime of childhood and youth; and we believe that this developement of the imitative faculty may be directed to useful purposes. The following Dramas were written expressly for the performance of young people, in private families and schools; not merely as an innocent amusement for them, (though that is, in itself, a good thing,) but in the hope that the representation of the wise and good might lead to the transfusion of their sentiments and feelings into the character of the imitator.

The Author urges particular attention to characteristic costume, which produces great effect, and its appropriation tends to cultiva both taste and judgment.

The "Eve of St. Mark's" is founded on "Les Maîtres Mosaïstes;" and "Ahmed, the Cobbler," is adapted, from a story related in Malcolm's "Sketches of Persia."

The Eur of St. Mark's;

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THE DEVOTED BROTHERS.

IN TWO ACTS.

Dramatis Personæ.

LUIGI MOCENIGO, Doge of Venice.

MELCHIORE, Principal Procurator.

COUNT OF ANJOU.

SEBASTIAN ZUCCATO, a celebrated Artist.

FRANCISCO ZUCCATO, Sons of the above.

TINTORETTO, the friend of Sebastian Zuccato.

VINCENT BIANCHINI, Mosaic-workers, and rivals

DOMENICO BIANCHINI, of the Zuccati.

BARTOLOMEO BOZZA, Mosaic-worker.

CECCATO, MARINI, Mosaic-workers of the Zuccati school.

Beppo, a boy, and assistant of the above.

MARIA, the daughter of Tintoretto.

Zanza, Attendant to the above.

Procurators and Council.

The Scene is laid in Venice.

Custume.

At the period when the events took place represented in the Play, the costume of the Venetians was much like that which we call Spanish costume, viz.: cloaks, caps, and feathers were worn by noblemen and artists, &c. Valerio's dress at the festival is described as a robe of green velvet, open in the front to display an embroidered waistcoat. This robe had wide slashed sleeves. He wore a cap with a white waving plume.

Maria (the daughter of Tintoretto) was dressed like one of Giambellino's angels—in a white tunic, a sky-blue gauze scarf, with a wreath of young vine-leaves round her head.

The Doge wears what is called the ducal bonnet, or ducal horn, so called from its peculiar form. "When Pepin, king of France, was at Venice, he perceived that the Doge bore about him no mark of his high dignity, he therefore detached a sleeve from his robe and placed it on his head, the end of which, as it fell forwards, has been imitated in the ducal bonnet." It is now ornamented with splendid jewels.

A Nun, or Sister of Mercy, is usually dressed in black, to whatever order she may belong, with a white linen veil across her head, or a black crape one over her eyes; her hair concealed with a white bandage round her head, another under her chin, and a white linen tippet.

THE EVE OF ST. MARK'S.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A room in the house of "Tintoretto." Sebastian Zuccato and Tintoretto.

Zuccato. It is in vain, Tintoretto, that you endeavour to reconcile me to my misfortune.

—It is no fancied evil.—It is a sad reality, and a sorrow that will accompany me to the grave!

What have I laboured for, if I am to be thus thwarted and disappointed in my fondest hopes?

Tintoretto. You have not laboured in vain, my friend: you have bestowed an education on your sons of a superior kind;—you have transmitted to them, both feelings and taste of the purest species;—you have implanted in their breasts a love for the highest art, which can never be lost; and you possess in them the best of Heaven's blessings—two virtuous sons, whose talent and goodness are only surpassed by their love and

respect for you. For such skilful and virtuous artists the Republic is deeply your debtor!

Zuccato. In that consists my affliction—to think that after all the efforts I have made, and all the self-denial I have practised, that my sons are no better than plasterers: you might as well congratulate an architect on having a son a clever bricklayer!

Tintoretto. Do not be unjust, Zuccato, your sons have not thrown away their education, nor the taste imbibed by your example. They have neither wasted their time nor talents. They are working for posterity, and trust me, they will transmit something perfect in art to your great-grand-children, and their descendants to the remotest posterity. When our carcasses have rotted into dust, their works will survive, and future ages will gaze with wonder and admiration on the dome of St. Mark's, when our best pictures are wormeaten and forgotten!

Zuccato. Talk as you may, Tintoretto, this is a degenerate age, when artists' sons, and such as mine, condescend to patch walls instead of painting altar-pieces. Anything for money, now-a-days!

Durability is no evidence of beauty or worth, or my shoemaker would be a greater artist than the maker of a foot, which may decay and lose its form before the leather that covers it!

Tintoretto. Now I know, Zuccato, that you allow your temper to blind your judgment. Your sons are worshippers of the beautiful and the good, and are not unworthy of the name of artists. We are indebted to the Greek for our early mosaic, and they to the Egyptians. Great authority for works both of elegance and perpetuity. Besides these, are not your sons copying and perpetuating the master-pieces of Titian and Paul Veronese? What do we know of the works of Apelles and Zeuxis now? But if they had been transmitted to the marble of the Parthenon, we might ourselves have judged of talent, of which we have no evidence but oral tradition.

Zuccato. Now, just let me put a plain question home to your own heart, and then you will understand and make due allowance for my feelings of paternal pride. If my good and steady son Francisco were to ask the hand of your only daughter Maria, on whose sweet face I love to

gaze,—the son of a painter, and himself an artist, might presume so far,—but pray what reply would you give to my mosaic-worker?

Tintoretto. What should I say? Why, my Maria, though a good and dutiful child, is not a mere passive being. She has gained for herself a right to choose and decide. She has painted many pictures that I should not blush to own; but, as regards myself, if I felt secure of your son's disinterested affection for her, I should be happy to bestow her hand and fortune, either on the grave Francisco or the gay Valerio!—Indeed I suspect she has a little inclination for Valerio; and no wonder!—he is her devoted slave, and such a clever fellow too!

Zuccato. Well, that I acknowledge is a test of your sincerity. Still, I cannot endure the thought of my sons climbing on walls like lizards, or sticking like bats to the cieling of St. Mark's!

Tintoretto. What matters that? If they are attaining everlasting fame, the end ennobles the means, and they will obtain a name as lasting as the materials with which they work. When our angels have fallen from the altar, theirs will

soar above in imperishable beauty, and the Zuccati will be known as the creators of such heavenly forms by nations yet unborn!

Zuccato. Well! well! I suppose I must go and see this mosaic-work.—Ohimé! Alas! alas! Angels faces made of squares and patches! Clouds and suns of stones and tinsel! By Bacchus and St. Mark, it will never, never do! [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—In the Basilica.

CECCATO, MARINI, VINCENT, and DOMENICO BIANCHINI.

Ceccato. Did you see how pleased that cross old Zuccato was, in spite of himself, and how he found fault with everything, and then how he hugged Francisco when he saw his beautiful Madonna, and recognized the features of his lost wife, and Valerio's angel, too, with his brother's eyes and expression? I thought the old fellow would have staggered off the platform, and died of joy!

Marini. Indeed I did, and Francisco seemed quite repaid for all his labours.

Vincent Bianchini. You fellows of the Zuccati school seem to talk as if no one had a hand in the decoration of St. Mark but yourselves; and pray what right have the Zuccati to put their family faces on the heads of angels and the Holy Mother of God, and thus transmit their insufferable conceit to posterity?

Marini. As for the cherubim, I believe that Valerio purposely chose his brother's fine face for the model of one of them. The Madonna he copied from a painting of Titian's; and the great Titian had taken the lovely face of Signora Zuccato for his model in his representation of our Holy Mother. She certainly must have been very handsome, judging from that splendid fellow Valerio, and the pious face of Francisco.

Ceccato. You, Vincent, would not surely have had your red beard on an angel's face?

Vincent. None of your insolence, Messer Ceccato, or I will denounce you to the procurators! When your face was made, it was cut out of Parmesan cheese! Learn how to behave, or I will upset you from the scaffolding some day, and your blood and bones shall make mosaic on the avement!

Marini. And it wouldn't be the first murder you had committed! That's my parting word for you, Vincent. [Exeunt Marini and Ceccato.

Bozza. I can tell you something, Vincent, that would make you superior to the Zuccati in the Basilica.

Vincent. Well, what is it? Out with it! And if you will join our school, you shall have a mastership soon; and we should not scorn your design and call it "illegitimate."

Bozza. And have they dared thus to insult me! under the mask of friendship? To-morrow's dawn shall not find me amongst the Zuccati. I renounce them for ever! Was it not enough to cross me in my love for Maria Tintoretto? They hold me, then, as base-born, though often and often have they said, genius and talent make all men equal!

Vincent. Well, Bozza, now that I have told you how lightly you are held by your masters, you are justified in denouncing them.

Bozza. I know nothing positively criminal against them; but I have my suspicions. Late at night, Francisco entered the Basilica. He did not

know that we were there: Valerio, in fact, had been paying us extra to work at night, and get all finished by St. Mark's Eve, to surprise Francisco. Well, as I was saying, Francisco entered by stealth, and put in the place of some enamel some pieces of painted pasteboard, as I conclude, to defraud the State of the more expensive material, by substituting some cheap imitation.

Domenico. If you can attest this before the procurator, we shall lower the pride of the Zuccati with a vengeance. You may call me jealous, and why not? Have we not been nearly ten years about the Genealogy of the Holy Virgin? If the Zuccati had been appointed to that work, they would have been a life-time about it! Why, Francisco is sometimes a whole month about a child's hand, or a fold of a robe. A cunning art of theirs, as they are paid by time. Only watch them, and see how they contrive to cheat the Republic! (In the distance are seen SEBASTIAN ZUCCATO and his sons.) Look! Look at that old snarling Zuccato! Behold his sons bowing to him, as if he were the Doge himself escorted by his senators! [Bozza sneaks off.

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Vincent. I am not jealous of the Zuccati, I despise them too much; but I hate them with a perfect hatred; and while it is our duty to inform the procurators of this affair, we must be cautious. Let us meet to-night, at three o'clock.* Tell Antonio to be at the Rialto without fail, and let Bozza know our plans.

Domenico. We had better arrange everything before Bozza joins our school, or some suspicion may fall upon us in the depositions to be laid before the procurators. I will order the gondola to be under the piazza of St. Mark's. It is only fifteen,* and we have still some hours to work. Would that Joseph and Mary had been like Adam and Eve, without any ancestry! I loathe the work as quite unworthy of such noble spirits as ours. We, Vincentio, ought to have fought against the Moors, instead of climbing ladders and beating the walls with mallets. By the body of Diana, Signori Zuccati, we have you now!

[Exeunt omnes.

[•] The Italians count the whole twenty-four hours in every natural day, and begin from sunset.



SCENE III. — Francisco seated at a table, leaning on his hand pensively. Enter Valerio.

Valerio. Surely, Francisco, you are not grieving on account of Bozza's desertion? He is not worthy of your regret, and he cannot injure us. Rouse yourself, dear Checo!* An airing on the Lagune will revive you. Come! I will row you to the Lido.

Francisco. Forgive me, dear Valerio, for damping the ardour of your spirits, but we approach the Eve of St. Mark's;—our work is unfinished, and our solemn engagements unfulfilled.

Valerio. If it be so, why mourn so grievously? You have laboured with unwearied zeal, and if the wind from the Adriatic has brought rain to damp the work and impede our progress, why should it damp your spirits? Your conscience, you know, acquits you!

Francisco. I do not know you, Valerio. Is that sense of honour now dormant within you, that once was your characteristic? Would you have me lounge in a gondola when our work is in-

^{*} The familiar name for Francisco, pronounced Keco.

complete, to which we are pledged, and for which we are paid? Believe me, dear brother, pleasure is the tempter that lures you from your duty, and blinds as she attracts.

Valerio. It may be so! I may be attracted by pleasure, and insensible to glory; but I think I am not neglectful of my duty, nor unmindful of my brother's feelings and wishes; and with such a pious brother for my guardian angel, I cannot stray far by the allurements of pleasure. Of what do you complain?

Francisco. Since you appeal to me so directly, I will answer candidly. You have looked of late both harassed and over-worked; and I am sure that revels at night and labour by day is too much even for your elastic spirits, dear Valerio.

Valerio. All that is life and recreation to me, I wish it were to you, Checo! Excitement is my element—the continual vicissitudes of labour and pleasure—privation and prodigality—suit my taste. Nature has been unjust in bestowing upon me the blessing of robust health, and having denied it to you, dear fellow! who would have benefited mankind more essentially; but so many good things

have fallen to your lot, you must not grudge me my iron constitution!

Francisco. Far be it from me to grudge or envy you any possession, especially that energy and joyousness I so much admire; but do you not risk, by your irregularities, the honour of your profession, the friendship of illustrious artists, and the good favour of the procurators?

Valerio. With the approbation of Vicelli and Tintoretto, whose esteem I truly value, and the love of my brother and father, I should not care if all the procurators were drowned in the Adriatic.

Francisco. Hush, Valerio! Beware of the Leads. But have you not the honour of your profession at heart? Are we not bound in honour to fulfil our engagement?

Valerio. Certainly; but to what does all this tend, or from what does your gloomy foreboding arise?

Francisco. I have to confess, unwillingly, that I have heard accusations against you, put forth by the Bianchini, which I could not quite refute!

Valerio. Perhaps not, Francisco. But to you, who are a second self, I may confess that I have a

dear object for my serenades, whose name I would not profane by breathing it to my comrades.

Francisco. If you have a virtuous attachment, and some good intent in your frequent absence from home, I hold you excused; but you look worn and anxious, and so do Marini and Ceccato, and they have no youthful folly to plead. I am afraid you all love Scyron wine too well.

Valerio. Rest assured, Caro Francisco, your influence with me is boundless. The pleasure that my father evinced to-day in our designs, and your generous silence, concerning the small amount of merit due to me, have bound me to you for ever with a love stronger than that of man to woman. Trust me, dear Francisco, your brother and your apprentices are not quite unworthy of you. I am, I confess, a little mistrustful of Bozza, whose jealousy bodes no good!

Francisco. I fear not that, but I deeply feel the disappointment of not completing our work by St. Mark's Eve. Our word was as much pledged as if a solemn contract had been made,

[Enter Beppo; he addresses Francisco. Beppo. Hasten to the Basilica, Messer Fran-

cisco, Marini sent me to tell you that the procurators are examining and testing the work before the Eve of St. Mark's. He says, "do not delay!"

Francisco. I can only plead illness in extenuation of unfinished labour. [He departs sadly.

Beppo. Oh Valerio! how pleased Messer Francisco will be when he sees that all is finished. I don't feel tired and sleepy now.

Valerio (patting his head). You were a good boy, Beppo! [Exit VALERIO.

Beppo (alone). When all the scaffolding and covering are removed from the recess, Francisco will see that all the work is done! The beautiful angels that Valerio, Ceccato, and Marini did at night! and I helped too! and Valerio gave me all these sequins for over-work. All done by St. Mark's Eve, after all! Eviva! Hurrah! [Exit.]

SCENE IV.—Bozza (alone).

Bozza. Did I not meet Tintoretto and Zuccato walking together to the Duomo? If Valerio have taken advantage of my former confidence, he is a

villain! Every way does he cross me. I should have been appointed a designer, if it had not been for him. I should have gained a mastership, if he had not interfered; and I might have been loved by Maria Tintoretto, if he had not stepped in with his serenades and his deceitful canzonets. He has now released me from all restraint. I will traduce him and his proceedings to the procurators. What a blow to the old conceited Father Zuccato. to have his son under the Leads! Now, Messer Valerio, I have my revenge! The work incomplete on the Eve of St. Mark's, and Francisco in prison !-- I must go and enjoy my first triumph on the visit to the Basilica. They will repent of scorning me and my work! [Enter BEPPO.

Beppo. Eviva, Bozza! You are of the Zuccati, are you not? Well, there has been such jolly fun! The procurators went to view the work. Master Francisco was so sad, he kept behind the Signori, and he dreaded to see them approach the recess, which was covered up, and he thought had never been touched. "Why is this wall still covered?" said their Highnesses, Melchiore and Malatesta. The crowd turned

round to look for Messer Francisco—he looked so pale, and was just beginning to say, "Illness alone"... Valerio stepped forward. It was all so beautifully contrived that, by a very gentle pull, down came the awning, and behold!—there were Valerio's lovely angels, as if they had come from the Heavens! Francisco fell on his knees, and looked as if he were praying to Valerio, instead of blessing God and our Holy Mother for giving him such a brother, (as somebody said he ought). Well! whilst the procurators were gazing at the last new work, Francisco was embracing us all—even me! and he said that if I had been an idle, good-fornothing boy, the work would not have been done! Come, Bozza, and look at it by daylight.

Bozza (who has been stamping his foot and showing signs of impatience). I hate them all! They pretend to be so good! (Aside.) [Exeunt.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Bozza and the Bianchini near the Hall of the Procurators.

Vincent. I do not understand you, Bozza; you seem but half a friend, and rather disposed to flinch from your promise. Since the Zuccati have completed their work, and are on good terms with the public, you want, I suppose, to go back to their school?

Bozza. Never, Master Vincent! I shall never flinch from my evidence, nor hesitate to tell the procurator what I have known and seen. I saw Francisco Zuccato cover a portion of the enamel with paint and paper! Use the information as you please. I owe them this grudge for having kept me from the mastership:—and as to Valerio, I could stab him to the heart for having supplanted me with the little Maria; but now that the work is complete, I cannot say they have defrauded the Republic of their time.

[Exit Bozza.

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Domenico. He is a touchy fellow, that is certain, but he has genius which has been cramped by envy.

Vincent. We must be satisfied with him as a witness. I have looked at the inscription, and can see the artifice myself;—how frequently this may have been done one cannot pretend to say. Such an ingenious contrivance once discovered, no one could resist using it to save labour and materials. It would be very wrong of us to conceal the fact from the authorities. Besides, we might be reproached at some future time, as having ourselves thus defrauded the State.

Domenico. Say nothing about that! What matters it to us, if we get money whilst living, what they say of us when dead? For my part, I don't know what people mean by "immortal fame." If I can have pleasure now without mortal infamy, I care not for "eternal renown." What are crowns of laurel on one's tomb, compared with crowns of silver in one's pocket? Come, let us go to the procurator!!

SCENE II.—MARIA TINTORETTO, alone, in full dress, as for a festival, with a crown of laurel or bay in her hand, reading a paper.

Maria. "Francisco is imprisoned under the Leads." This explains all! Why should I have doubted Valerio's affection? The true heart is never mistrustful. If we were quite good and pure ourselves, we could never suspect deceit or wrong in others. We should ever trust and excuse . . . (Enter Zanza, out of breath.) Well, Zanza! What success? My impatience is more than that of a lover!

Zanza (still panting). I sent my brother to his friend, the procurator's attendant, and he heard all that had passed. The procurator had received some information that made him send for some of his people, and they went with him to the Duomo. This was whilst all the grand festival was going on. There, in the presence of witnesses, sure enough, something was pulled down or scratched off from

the walls; and some said it was right, and some said it was wrong; and you know, Signorina, that there is nothing in this world that has not a right side and a wrong.

Maria. True enough; but go on—don't stop to make reflections!

Zanza. Well, where was I? Why, my brother says, that everybody thinks that Francisco Zuccato could not do wrong; and then others say, "Seeing is believing!" and that he is a cheat; and then, somebody said he would sooner doubt his own eyesight than believe that either of the Zuccati were cheats!

Maria. He was quite right! he must have been a truly good man himself!

Zanza. How it will end I don't know; but they say that Francisco is so weak that he will be sure to die in the Leads.

Maria. Not if we—that is, not if my father can prevent it.

Zanza. But pray, Signorina, why were all the ceremonies of the festival stopped? I heard that Valerio was the victor at the Ring, and that just as he was approaching you to receive the crown, he

bounced off as if he hated the very sight of you! Alas! alas! You have the crown in your hands still! And Valerio looked so handsome as he passed by; and I thought you were as happy as any Dogaressa! Alas! alas! How sad you look in your best robe!

Maria. I am sad, indeed, and your account fills me with affright. It is easier to get into prison than to get out again. Zanza, you must help me! You must borrow your sister's dress. Sisters of Charity are admitted everywhere. Take this pencil and paper to Francisco. (Goes to a table to fetch them.) I am sure that he can remove the charge against him. On this he can write his justification: I have heard something from my father which is a clue to it. I will give you a cordial;—wrap the paper round the medicine, and put the pencil up your sleeve. (She stops, as if reflecting.) Stay, I will accompany you.

Zanza. Oh, no! my beloved mistress, you must not go! They say the plague is in the prison. What would Messer Tintoretto say?

She runs off.

Maria (alone). I will risk all! Would he not

have done so for a brother of mine? My conscience tells me I am right. Had Valerio been in prison, I must have endured in silence; now I can act without mistrusting myself. Yes, I am right! My father will forgive me; and Valerio—no, I will not think of him. May our Blessed Lady grant that I may not meet the envious, odious Bozza!

SCENE III.—Doge and attendants walking in, accompanied by the Count of Anjou, Valerio following in full dress.

Doge (to Valerio). Do not importune me, young artist; your brother's case will be attended to. He has committed some indiscretion, and a few days' imprisonment will serve to cool his blood!

Valerio. May it please your Excellency to listen one moment more.—My brother is weak, and I am strong. Let me be the prisoner until judgment is declared by the council. I can well bear confinement!

Doge. Your request is absurd, and impossible to grant. He must be the victim of his own crime!

Valerio. And have I lived for this? My pure, my good, my holy brother!—to be called a victim, and charged with crime!

Count A. Forbear, rash youth! or you will injure your brother by your intemperate zeal.

Valerio. Thanks, most compassionate Lord! Conjure the Doge to let me visit Francisco. (The Count whispers to the Doge.)

Doge. Here is my pass for the jailer. (Gives him a paper.) But mark! the penalty is your own imprisonment! If you go, you return not!

Valerio (kneeling). Thanks, thanks to your Excellency! This is the next best gift to Francisco's release! May you learn in time the innocence of my brother, and his devotion to St. Mark's and his beloved Venice!

Doge. May it be so! [Exit Doge.

Count A. Take this, Valerio. (Taking off a chain and presenting it to VALERIO.) Take it, not as a gift, but as payment for the designs you made for the beautiful bracelets for my beloved Marietta. (VALERIO refuses). Refuse it not. It may serve your brother in need.

He throws the chain, and Exit.

Valerio (taking up the chain). Everything will I do for Francisco! [Exit.

SCENE IV.—A Prison. Francisco, alone, reclining on a couch.

Francisco. And this is St. Mark's Festival! And thus am I passing a day to which I have looked forward so anxiously, as the crowning glory of my dear Valerio! How little can we reckon on what a day may bring forth! This was the day when Valerio with his comrades, the Companions of the Lizard, in their gay attire, were to enter the lists and tilt at the Ring. Surely he will have carried off the prize, with the sympathy, too, of the multitude. I see him kneeling before the lovely and gifted Maria, Queen of the Festival. The very imagination of the scene delights me; and as I see the crown placed upon his beautiful head, my heart beats in unison with his! How well does he deserve all these honours! but, alas! he would not smile. nor his heart palpitate with joy, if he knew that his Francisco-his brother-was suffering under the Leads. When his gay troop passes below, I must

send some token of my imprisonment. A tile dropped with a few words will suffice:-"Francisco is under the Leads!" By whose machinations I am here, it is almost impossible to conjecture! I have never willingly injured any one. Bozza seemed always discontented and gloomy; but he could have no sinister designs against me, who wished to be his friend. Oh! how I grieve to think what will be your sorrow, Valerio! Who ever possessed such a brother? Whilst I reproached him for gaiety and frivolity, he was spending his nights in working to maintain my reputation-labouring for his poor, weak Francisco! Instead of revelling at the gay masquerade, singing glees by moonlight on the cool Lagune, or serenading with his guitar beneath the balcony of his Bella Marietta-he was working like a slave; and all for me! Trembling on the perilous scaffolding-sleeping at intervals, only to give him strength for fresh exertion-all to relieve this feeble frame of mine, my weak heart and anxious mind. A few more days, and this close prison will destroy me. First let me devise some plan to let Valerio know that his brother is dying. If I

desire to live, it is for him alone; but I feel that I am fast sinking, and soon shall pass on. Farewell, Valerio! [Curtain falls.

SCENE V.—Hall of the Procurators. Procurator Melchiore Malatista, seated. Attendants, standing.

Melchiore (to an attendant). Order Zuccato and Tintoretto to enter! [Exit servant. Enter Zuccato, leaning on the arm of Tinto-RETTO. They bow coldly.

Melchiore. I have condescended, my friends, to devote a short period of my valued time, to hear your presumptuous statements as regards your son's innocence.

Zuccato. Will it please your Excellency to name the cause of my son's detention, or what you would call his guilt?

Melchiore. In consideration of your age, and standing in Venice, I shall condescend to read to you the depositions made against your son, and transmitted by me to our august tribunal; you

will then see that we could have no hesitation in pronouncing him guilty. The official power and majesty of Venice is like the sun!—it has neither spot nor blemish, and its rays are exended as widely and beneficially over our noble city,—and penetrates into its inmost recesses.

Tintoretto. It may be presumptuous in me to address the constituted authorities vested in your Excellency, and to imagine even the possibility of error; but, as our holy Church declares one mortal, alone, is infallible, I am tempted to remonstrate. Know, then, that of all the virtuous youths of Venice, Francisco Zuccato ranks the highest; and every father has hitherto said—"May my son be like unto him!"

Melchiore. When you have heard the charge, you will acknowledge that I could do no less than act on the information received, for the honour of St. Mark's and the Ducal Horn. Attend! Francisco Zuccato is charged with the following misdemeanors:—

Firstly. With having defrauded the State by performing his Mosaic work hastily and without solidity; by working at improper seasons, that is to say, during frost, when the mastic will not cement. This being done to make up for time lost in the summer, in excursions, dissipation, and all sorts of wickedness.

Zuccato (Aside). "All sorts of wickedness! Falsehood—lies, all! all!

[Tintoretto, whispering, tries to appease him. Secondly. He is charged with having made imperfect designs, and having used wrong colours, in consequence of working by night, to compensate for preceding idleness.

Thirdly. He is charged with having allowed his brother Valerio to perform parts of the work for which he was utterly incompetent. He, being ignorant of the higher branches of the art, and only capable of making mosaic bracelets and brooches, chains, &c., for women and boys; which puerile work was carried on lucratively at San Filippo, whilst the Republic paid him enormously for work which he did not perform. In fact, for that of which he was incapable!

Zuccato. "Incapable!" my sons! the sons of an artist, incapable!

TINTORETTO endeavours to calm him.

Fourthly. Of having, by detestable cunning, replaced, in many compartments, pieces of wood and painted paper, instead of enamel and stone; for the purpose of giving a finish to designs, of which the materials employed for mosaic-work are incapable. Thus obtaining merit for artistic effect, which might obtain them some credit during the artists' lifetime, but which is detrimental to the permanent beauty of the building, or, rather, to the durability of the ornamental part of it.

[During the reading of the charges, ZUCCATO shows great indignation, continually repeating the words of accusation, &c. TINTORETTO tries to appease him, by whispers and gestures.

Zuccato. Who has dared!---

Melchiore. Beware! old man! Your indiscreet zeal may injure, it can never serve your sons. That you may know how well-founded are these depositions, I may inform you, that they are signed by our respectable cashier—by your sons' pupil, Bartolomeo Bozza; the Bianchini, John Viscentino, and others of their school; as, also, Claude of Corregio, the organist of St. Mark's.

Zuccato. Before we leave, let me acquaint your

Excellency, that I hold in my hand testimonials of good conduct from our illustrious Titian, and his son Horace, Tintoretto (now present), Paul Veronese, Marini, Ceccato, and the good priest, Alberto Zio. All willing to appear before the Council of Ten, to testify to the talent, exquisite workmanship, the honourable conduct, industry, and scrupulous probity of the two brothers Zuccati, and their school. Allow me also to state, too, that Andrea Schiavone has gone to the very marrow of the subject, and hence has obtained the name of "La Medola."

Melchiore. Artifice of some kind has been employed. What does it matter to the State, that the forms of angels should be modelled according to the strict rules of art? All that is very well for lectures; you have never seen any angels, or your sons either. This is an affair of cheating the State of the proper material for mosaic; and the cashier has a just right to condemn the fraudulent, until he is proved innocent. You may depart!

[TINTORETTO and ZUCCATO execunt; the latter raising his hands in deprecation, and in mute astonishment.



Melchiore. There has been some envy and calumny at work; I must see to it, without delay, for the honour of the Republic. [Exit.

SCENE VI.—A Prison. Francisco lying on a pallet. Maria and Zanza, disguised as two Sisters of Mercy, and attending on him.

Francisco. Thanks, good Sister! Nothing you can give me now can restore—nothing can avail me now! Pray leave me! Your pious zeal and tender charity may be fatal to you. Preserve your valuable lives for the service of others. Leave me! Leave me to die! Yet, stay; if you would bestow a last favour on a dying prisoner, take this ring to Valerio Zuccato, and bear with it the devoted love of a dying brother! (MARIA tells ZANZA what to say, in a whisper.)

Zanza (taking the ring). Your wishes shall be fulfilled. [Enter Jailer.

Jailor (to the Sisters). Some one wishes to see the prisoner; he bears the Doge's pass.

Francisco (rising feebly). To see me! Tell

him I have the plague. (Exit Jailer.) If it be my good father, or if it be my beloved brother, say that I am dying! say that all of life within me implores him to leave this infected place! Oh! good Sisters, tell him this!

[MARIA again whispers to ZANZA.

Zanza. Your weakness and fears deceive you. Though borne down by disease and sorrow, you are not dying! The jailer told us that you had none of the symptoms of the plague. You will still live to love and be loved by your dear Valerio!

Francisco. Alas, no! (Sinking down).

[Enter Jailer.

Jailer. The Signor will not leave. He will see you; and if you have the plague, he says he will nurse you. His name is Valerio Zúccato!

[Valerio enters.

Francisco. Beloved Valerio! How blessed am I! (The brothers embrace).

Maria (aside). Beloved Valerio! (She whispers to Zanza).

Zanza (to Francisco). We will now leave you, and come in the morning, with other restoratives.

Brotherly love will do its good work in the meantime. Farewell! [Execunt.

Francisco. Dearest Valerio! you risk your life for me! I am selfish in embracing you! The good Sisters would fain persuade me that I have not the plague-spot upon me. Please Heaven it be so! But you must go hence! our poor father would not survive the loss of both his sons!

Valerio. Be tranquil, dear Francisco! I am your companion, until the angel of mercy come to release you. My coming here was on condition of my not going forth again, until you are relieved by death or pardon; and, oh! how truly would I have purchased this at a higher price!

Francisco. Listen to me, Valerio, and do not let your affection for me blind you to your duty. You will soon be your father's only son, and he has claims before those of a brother. And then—and then, Valerio, you love Maria Tintoretto! and for her sake, you should preserve your life!

Valerio. You have named, indeed, two tender ties to life; but you know both the character of Maria as well as that of my father. Do you think they would value one who could hesitate to make every

sacrifice—his life, if need be—to save such a son, and such a brother, as Francisco Zuccato? No, if they believed me such a one, they could soon supply my place. My faults and follies have been many, but I am not insensible to your goodness; and I know that you early saw the noble mind of my dear Maria, and, but for me, would have gained her love. What do I not owe to you?

[Valerio takes off his cloak, and makes a pillow of it for Francisco.

Francisco. Have you discovered who is our enemy, and why I am imprisoned?

Valerio. Not entirely, and I fear to implicate any one. Tintoretto and my father have applied to the procurator Melchiore, to the Doge, and the Council of Ten. The origin and sole foundation of the charge of fraud, is the correction we made of the error in the inscription which that ignorant Malatesta wrote; but, when he appeals to the Council, they will surely recognize your innocence, or, if guilty, only of the crime of plastering over part of the inscription, and substituting saxis for saxibus. Their heads and hearts must be of stones, if they cannot soften at such an exposure,



when the light dawns upon them. I am almost afraid to utter the name of him whom I believe to be the malicious informant; I wish he were a stranger to kindness and to you. Suspicion and jealousy have stifled his gratitude, if he ever possessed the feeling. Let this pass! I envy him not his liberty! a bed of straw to lie on, and black bread to swallow, are better than the thorny pillow of jealousy, and the bitter cup of envy. [Enter Jailer.

Jailer. A holy Sister of Mercy has just left this restorative. The directions for its use are on the paper around it. (Valerio takes the packet, and unfolds the paper). [Exit Jailer.

Valerio (reading). "This balm to be applied immediately.—Relief will follow in a few hours. La Sorella Spera." This is Maria's writing! Angel of Mercy! Ave Maria! (He kisses it.) Dear Francisco! there is hope for us both! (He turns the paper.) A motto in French! "Esperez toujours. Le bon tems viendra!" Maria would not raise hopes which could not be fulfilled! Listen to this Francisco—"Relief will follow in a few hours!" Our guardian angel bids us hope! Drink this cordial, though I feel whilst I offer it

that a better restorative awaits you—a draught of pure air. (FRANCISCO drinks).

Francisco. Your joyous, hopeful spirit, dear Valerio, revives me already. What day is this? Surely the day must be past on which our pictures are to be judged by the procurators. Did you hear the decision?

Valerio. No, my brother, the time is not yet arrived. Days and hours are very long in prison. To-morrow, I believe, is the appointed day. Think of nothing now but resting yourself. "Relief will follow in a few hours," says our guardian angel. Let us rest, and fall asleep with devotion in our hearts and grateful prayers upon our lips! [Valerio and Francisco lie down to sleep, and the curtain falls.

SCENE VII.—Hall, surrounded with pictures. Judges seated. Doge in the centre. Zuccato, Tintoretto, Francisco, Valerio, Bozza, Bianchini, and others.

Doge (rising). The merits of the different designs have been duly examined and criticized,

Three pictures claim peculiar attention, and rise so superior to their competitors, that, if we had a fourth prize to award, we should find selection a difficulty. These three are pre-eminent! (Bozza shows signs of impatient vanity.) With the usual judgment and impartiality of our Sacred Council, the names on the reverse of the pictures were to be feigned, and they were accompanied by sealed packets, with the artist's real name enclosed. The first prize is decreed to the picture bearing the title, (Bozza advances) "The Emulator."

Francisco. It is Valerio's! (He rushes into his brother's arms, almost fainting.)

[Bozza gnashes his teeth.

Doge. Order! Repress your ecstacies, with due reverence for our ducal presence! (Maria whispers, smiling to Valerio, who takes her hand and kisses it.) The second prize—a picture of scarcely less merit than the preceding one—bears the signature of "The Brother."

Valerio. It is Francisco's! (He rushes towards his brother and embraces him.)

Doge. The third prize is awarded, not so much for its intrinsic excellence, as because it is above

the standard of others: it is immeasurably below the two first, which are worthy of our best masters; with due deference to the valued artists who stand before me. (The Doge bows to Zuccato and Tin-TORETTO.) The third painting of merit bears the presumptuous title of "Optimus," and to that we decree the lowest prize. Who claims it? (Bozza stamps with rage, and falls down in a fit of passion.) Take out that unruly man! (The Doge to attendants, who carry off Bozza.) For your advice and judgment, artists of Venice, we thank you. (Turning to SEBASTIANO ZUCCATO.) If in aught, Zuccato, we can compensate to you and your son for his unjust imprisonment, now is the time to name it. Thus to acknowledge publicly the error of some of our officials (and rarely do they err) may be, perhaps, both to you and your sons, a great atonement. But I think you have your reward in their fame, which will descend to posterity with the splendour of St. Mark's—the diadem of the queen of the Adriatic, our glorious Venice!

Zuccato. A grateful father and loyal subject asks no greater favour, no higher honour, than to

see his sons' merit acknowledged in the eyes of all Venice. He could now leave this world with calm resignation: his happiness is complete!

Tintoretto. Permit another happy father to speak his joy. His only daughter has not only inherited his love of the glorious art of painting, but his ardent love of the good and the true. She believes they exist in the heart of Valerio Zuccato, the second son—but first in talent—of the celebrated Zuccato, my old and tried friend. If it please your Excellency to bestow her hand upon the successful artist, he will think that this day has crowned all his hopes and wishes; and his last prize will surpass the first!

Valerio (kneels at Maria's feet, and takes her hand). Oh! too blessed! too happy!

Doge (advancing and taking Maria's hand, which he joins to Valerio's). I consent, willingly. She needs no dower. A pure unsullied mind and loving heart is Heaven's best endowment! Let this bethrothal be celebrated and confirmed at the altar of St. Mark's, and we will attend the bridal.

Valerio, still holding Maria's hand, sings the fol-

lowing verses, to the air of "The Carnival of Venice:"—

The fairest gem from heaven above,

Here you give to me!

And as we pledge our faith and love,

Homage pay to thee. (Turning to the

Doge.)

When joy awakes, and love begins
To celebrate this day,
We'll tune our lutes and mandolins,
And sing a grateful lay.

CHORUS.

Let all around St. Mark's be gay!
Friends of mirth and glee;
Let ev'ry voice its tribute pay
To thee—Great Doge! to thee!

Let ev'ry note of grateful praise
Resound from shore to shore,
And whilst we thus our voices raise,
May echo say, "Encore!"

(Echo, "Encore!")

Viva! Viva! Viva! Viva!

Viva! Viva! Viva!

Long live our most beloved Doge!

May echo say, "Encore!"

Echo, at a distance. "Encore! Encore!"

Ahmed, the Cobbler;

OR,

THE ASTROLOGER.

IN TWO ACTS.

Dramatis Personæ.

AHMED, a Cobbler.
ZITTARA, the Wife of Ahmed.
SHACKABAC, the Sultan's Jeweller.
AMINA, a Merchant's Wife.
REIS OFFENDI, Captain of the Robbers.
SULTAN.
ZEMIRAH, the Sultan's Daughter.
ZAMRE,
BOORA,
FANZEE,
BOGRHOO,

Robbers, Slaves, &c.
The Scene is laid in Ispahan.

Enstume.

THE Cobbler must be dressed first in a loose dark coat, somewhat like a paletot, and a white turban. As the Astrologer, Ahmed must wear a crimson robe, with loose sleeves, and a border of mysterious characters upon it; a painted crimson cap—a kind of Fes—with a white bandeau, on which are painted signs of the zodiac, &c.

Females in the East do not wear what we call turbans, but a picturesque roll round the head, with pendant fringed or tasselled ends.

The room should be decorated with charts of the planets, constellations, orreries, and a large diagram of the signs of the zodiac in the middle, and globes on each side, &c.

The general effect of Oriental costume may be produced by cloaks and turbans, and loose trowsers fastened at the ancle, and coloured slippers.

AHMED, THE COBBLER.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Cobbler seated at his work.

Enter Zittara, running.

Zittara. Still cobbling! Cobble! cobble! cobble! Sew! sew! all day long! I think you will end by sewing up your eyes and ears!

Ahmed. Truly, my proud Zittara, I would willingly sew up my ears when you reproach me; but I love to look at you too well to sew up my eyes!

Zittara. None of your flattery, Ahmed! If you had any sense and proper pride, you would not sit, stitch! stitch! stitch! all day, with such a woman for a wife! You have a grovelling, pitiful spirit, and I am determined to act for you!

Ahmed. Well, dear Zittara! what would you have me do? Is it not for you that I work so hard?

Zittara. Prove it, then! Take up some high calling, and shew that you are worthy of being the husband of the great grand-daughter of Aldeboran, the astrologer to the sultan Mahmoud! Have I not just seen the wife of the king's astrologer, borne in her palanquin, with the bearers in green and gold, proceeding to the Himmaum, with a slave to carry her fan, and another to carry her parasol? that's semething like! Oh! if I had not married a cobbler, I might have been as happy as she!

Ahmed. But remember, Zittara, you would not have had your fond, foolish Ahmed to adore you!

Zittara. If you really love me as you say, give a proof of it in more than words. I have resolved that you shall turn astrologer! and I have made every preparation for your new calling.

Ahmed. Turn astrologer! surely, Zittara, all the finery of Badab's wife has turned your brain! Where's my learning? Where's my telescopes and horoscopes, star-scopes and moon-scopes? Why, my dear, I know nothing about the faces of the moon, except the man's face! and where that man came from, and what his name is, I couldn't tell you if it were to save my life!

Zittara. Dolt that you are! Who do you think will ask you his name? Hold your tongue, so! shake your head, so! and look wise, so! and nobody will find out how little you know!

Ahmed. I am quite sure, Zittara, that astrologers know all about diggits and eclipses, and schemes of nativity, and houses in heaven; but they are all Greek and Hebrew to me. All I know for certain is, that the sun rises up every morning to the top of the Mosque, and crosses over the city till it reaches the palace, and then it goes out, and the moon comes in its place!

Zittara. Trust to me! You see how I have begun to arrange the room. Listen to me! and if you don't make your fortune—why, I'll eat your lasts!

Ahmed. I am afraid, my dear, it would be your last meal!

Zittara. None of your jests, Ahmed, they are only fit for a vulgar cobbler, and you are going to be an astrologer; learned men never jest! Here's all the dress and furniture of my great-grandfather, Aldeboran, the astrologer of the sultan Mahmoud. Here's the astrolabes and horoscopes he projected,

and calculations, and all that sort of thing. Put away your thread, slippers, and awl, and never offend my sight again with such contemptible tools!

[Kicks away his tools.]

Ahmed. Thou knowest, Zittara, that I am too fond of thee, and thou hast often made a fool of me, and now thou wouldst make me a sage! If I can be an astrologer and an honest man, I will indulge you.

Zittara. Mind what I tell you;—I will act as your attendant, and whisper in your ear what to say; and, by the departed spirit of my great-grandfather, Aldeboran, astrologer to the sultan Mahmoud, we shall make our fortune! Already have I told a boy to go round the city and announce you as an astrologer! (She then points to a diagram of the planets.) This, with the ring, is Saturn.

Ahmed. Oh! then, I suppose he is married! Zittara. This, with the seven moons, is Jupiter.

Ahmed. Jew-Peter! That I can remember! Zittara. This is Mercury. This, the Earth.

Ahmed. The Earth! What, up in the sky? No, Zittara, I don't pretend to much, but I do

know better than that! This dirty brown earth shine like a star? No! nobody could ever make me believe that! It's a mistake altogether, depend upon it! It's all make-believe of the astronomers!

Zittara. Pay attention to me! This is Venus; this, Mercury.

Ahmed. Alas! alas! my dear Zittara! If an astrologer is obliged to remember the stars, I give it up! I don't know Jew-Peter from Jew-No, nor Marcury from Wenus!

Zittara. Keep your own counsel. Fools talk; wise men are silent! You know, Ahmed, I am a determined woman! and if you don't do as I tell you, I'll be divorced to-morrow; but I know you will be obedient to your dear Zittara!

[A knocking is heard, and a voice from without says:—

In the name of the Prophet! tell me if this be the house of Ahmed, the astrologer? And if so, let me in!

[ZITTARA hastily dresses Ahmed in his astrologer's dress,

SCENE II.—Enter SHACKABAC, the king's jeweller. He salutes Ahmed. Zittara takes her place behind Ahmed's chair.

Shackabac Good Ahmed, the city of Ispahan has heard of your wonderful inspiration. It will now be put to the test; but if you tamper with the marvellous power of reading the stars, and fore-telling the future, evil will befall you and yours. Know, then, that I have lost the most glorious ruby of the royal crown. Death and dishonour await me; but if your search into hidden things can aid me, ten purses shall be yours! (He kneels down and covers his face with his hands.)

Zittara (prompts AHMED). Remember the sign!

Ahmed (turning to ZITTARA). What sign?

Zittara (aside). Alas! I forgot to teach him the signs.

Ahmed. Your sign? (To SHACKABAC.)

Shackabac (still stooping down). Thou wouldst know the sign under which I was born. It was

the balance,—and I have ever been known as the Just.

Ahmed. If you are just, you are to be pitied for being joined to the unjust. Go; I will search into your fate!

Shackabac (musing). "Joined to the unjust!" These words prove that he refers to my extravagant wife! Farewell!

Slave (stepping from his hiding-place). This must be told to my mistress!

[Exit SHACKABAC and Slave.

SCENE III.

Zittara. Now, Ahmed, I must teach you the signs of the zodiac.

Ahmed. Oh, my dear! that won't do; even your signs are of no use,—what can zodiac's do?

Zittara. Do? Why, they are the principal stock-in-trade of astrologers. Don't you see them here? (Pointing.) The ram, the bull, the heavenly twins, the next the crab the lion shines, the virgin, and the scales, the archer, scorpion and sea-

goat, the man that holds the water-pot, and fish with glittering tails.

Ahmed (repeats). By the help of the pictures I may remember them. The sheep, the cow, the boys, the crab and lion's noise, the lady and the scales, the bowman, scorpion and sea-goat, the man that holds the coffee-pot, and fish with slippery tails.

Zittara. Well, pretty well for the first time: but see, some one comes! [Enter Slave.

Slave (making a salam). My master has informed his wife of your suspicions. She has ordered me to give you this purse of gold, with her request that you will tell her where she shall place the ruby to avoid suspicion.

Ahmed (writes a few words). Take this scroll, which will inform her what to do.

Zittara. Our fortune is made!

Ahmed. Oh, Zittara! how can you like such trickery?

Zittara. Pooh, pooh! With such a beginning, trust me, your native cunning will come to your aid; but if you falter, I swear by my great-grandfather, astrologer to the sultan Mahmoud,

that I will betray you to the king, and get a divorce!

Ahmed. Alas, Zittara! you have much to answer for! Take all this gold, and let me cobble again!

Zittara. Hush! There is a splendid palanquin at the door. (Looking out.)

SCENE IV.—Enter Amina, the merchant's wife.

Amina. I hear, learned Ahmed, that you have discovered wonderful secrets. Know, then, that I am Amina, the wife of one of the richest merchants in Ispahan. As a pledge of his love, he gave me a ring of inestimable value. If I lost it, he would think I undervalued his love—which is my pearl of greatest price. In going to the Himmaum it must have fallen from my hand. Has it been stolen, or can I recover it? Should your science assist me, fifty piastres shall be yours.

[AHMED looks bewildered.

Zittara (prompts, aside). Nativity—planets—houses of heaven!

Ahmed (sententiously to the merchant's wife). When I have cast thy nativity—found thy house in the heavens—consulted the planets, then I will tell thee more. What beautiful slippers! (ZITTARA puts her hand on AHMED'S mouth, and shakes her fist at him.)

Amina. "Slippers!" What does he mean? "Slippers!" (She takes off her slipper, and beholds her ring.) Marvellous astrologer! nothing can be concealed from thee! Verily thou couldst see through cloth of gold. Take freely one hundred piastres instead of fifty. I am a happy woman! May Allah direct and reward thee!

[Exit.

Ahmed. Another escape!—so much for being a cobbler! I saw her slippers between the folds of her robes. But the time will come when I shall get the bastinado instead of piastres and purses! Let us go to rest.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE L-A Cave.

1st Robber. Now that we are assembled, I have to inform our comrades that we are suspected of the last capture of the sultan's treasures. He has applied to the most celebrated astrologer in Ispahan, to discover where this treasure is deposited. His High Mightiness has given a certain time to gain information, and the cunning fellow has already found out there are forty of us.

2nd Robber. He need be no great conjurer for that; twenty chests of their weight, must needs have forty men to lift them.

Srd Robber. But I heard in the city that this astrologer, Ahmed, had already made wonderful discoveries. Suppose we go to his house at nightfall, and learn what he knows about us. A little stratagem may succeed; and if that won't do, why we can bribe his vain wife, who would do anything for money. If you are not satisfied with what I hear-why you can all go in turn!

SCENE II.—In Ahmed's house.

Ahmed. Your ambition, Zittara, and my life, will soon have an end! I have seen the sultan about his lost treasure. He has commanded me to procure him some information before forty days are over. I must give him some account of it, or I am a lost man! Let us leave the city, and earn an honest livelihood.

Zittara. Mean-spirited wretch! think only of finding the treasure;—you have just as good a chance as you had of finding the ruby; but if you attempt to run away, I will inform against you, and you will then die before forty days are out! Thou knowest me too well to doubt my word. So take courage, and then you will secure the fortune to which my birth and my beauty entitle me!

Ahmed. Thou art my tyrant, and I am thy slave! but try me not too far, or my love will turn to hate. Count me out forty dates, and I will put them in my cup of destiny.

Zittara (counts the dates). You think more of your dates than your duty.

[A robber is seen hiding himself.

Ahmed. Leave me to repose. This is the first of the forty. (Eats a date.) [Exit ZITTARA.

SCENE III.—Enter four Children with a dog.

Ahmed (seated). My wife is out; what can I do?

Zamre. Great Mr. Astrologer, will you help us?

Ahmed. Yes, my little friends; what would you know?

Fanzee. Will you find out whose dog this is by your wonderful stars?

Ahmed. Let me see.—First tell me all you know about it.

Zamre. Please, Mr. Astrologer, mother gave it to me and sister Fanzee, and all are sure it is ours.

Fanzee. Yes, I love it very much;—I love it next to Zamre.

Boora. I say it's mine!

Bogrhoo. So do I!

Ahmed (covering the dog). Describe the form and colour of the dog.

Zamre. It has one white paw, and some white under its chin.

Bogrhoo. It has a head and a tail, and is black; that's enough.

Fanzee. It has a brown spot on its left ear.

Boora. It has four legs and one head.

Ahmed. As I cannot find out until the dog is dead, I must divide him in four, and give you each a part, if it do not belong to either of you! Fetch me my knife!

Zamre and Fanzee. Oh! good Mr. Astrologer, don't kill him!

Boora and Bogrhoo. Very well; give me his head or give me his tail! ZITTARA comes in.

Ahmed (to Boora and Bogrhoo). Of a surety, now I know that this dog belongs to Zamre and Fanzee; and if you don't make off, I'll send the Reis after you for the bastinado!

[Exeunt Boora and Bogrhoo.

Fanzee and Zamre. Thanks, Mr. Astrologer! Would you like to have our little Gobee?

Ahmed. No, my children; take it home.

Zittara. Well, Ahmed, I think you have become a real astrologer!

Ahmed. No, Zittara, I am no dervise! I have only followed the example of the wisest of men. I am no Solomon myself. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV .- Cave of Robbers.

Captain. We must now, my comrades, enter into some treaty with the wily astrologer, or we shall be all given up to imprisonment or death. For seven successive nights some of our band have passed near the window of Ahmed; each time this cunning fellow said, This is one of the forty! or, there are already four or five of the forty! It would be wise to give up this treasure, or our trade is done up for ever.

1st Robber. What would our brave captain? He has only to command, and we have only to obey.

Captain. Put on some fair disguise, and hie thee to the astrologer's. Tell him to signify to you where the treasure shall be placed, that the sultan may have no suspicion. Quick, depart! Tell him, if the affair be managed well, a hundred piastres will be left at his door! Let us disperse.

2nd Robber. I shall go in my wife's dress!

SCENE V.

Ahmed. Time rolls on, Zittara, and my end approaches. What is the use of all this acting? Let me once more have my board, my wax, my thread, my awl!

Zittara. Oh, Ahmed! the soul of a cobbler still burns within you! Have we not already made two hundred purses?

[Enter Robber, disguised.

Ahmed. My days are numbered; there will soon be an end to the forty! A wicked woman is like a dragon of the desert!

Robber (repeats aside). "There will soon be an end of the forty! A wicked woman is like a dragon of the desert." Wonderful science! Who would have thought it? I am amazed at his wisdom.

Zittara (comes forward to the Robber). Do you wish to consult the learned Ahmed, the descendant of Aldeboran, astrologer of the sultan Mahmoud, of pious memory, who read the stars, and transmitted his power to his posterity?

Robber. Tell me, then, Ahmed, who I am.

Ahmed. Not what you seem.

Robber. We must be alone before I say farther.

Ahmed. Fear not, my attendant is faithful.

Robber. Your lives depend upon silence! Your knowledge has discovered the forty brave fellows who carried off the sultan's treasures. Now mark! If you can point out a place to deposit the chests, and make the officers of the sultan give up their search—mind, ask no questions,—and before ten days have expired the treasures shall be there, with fifty piastres for thy attendant. If not, thy head be the forfeit!

Ahmed (in a trembling voice). My power is from the stars—the celestial regions—the heavens. If they are not left in the cypress-grove, near the Himmaum, the sultan will proceed on the eleventh day to—to—to—

Zittara (prompts, aside). To the cave where they lie.

Ahmed. To the cave where they lie.

Robber. I shall bear your decree to our captain. [Exit.

Ahmed. Here, Zittara, ends my deceit. When I have restored to the sultan his lost treasure, and

received the reward, I shall place it in your hands, and begin again my honest calling. Instead of putting my own soul in peril by meddling with things of heaven, I shall mend my neighbour's soles—the upper regions shall be changed to upper-leathers; and instead of casting nativities, I shall cast off slippers, and sing, oh be joyful!

Zittara. Then, Ahmed, I will be divorced, and no longer be yoked to such a base-born cobbling fellow! Mind what I say!—What I say I mean, and what I mean I say! Farewell.

SCENE VI.—Sultan on his divan, smoking.

Attendants and his daughter Zemirah, veiled.

Ahmed in the background.

Sultan. Advance, Ahmed! (Ahmed advances and kneels before the Sultan.) You need not fear my presence. I am indebted to you for the restoration of treasure I thought was lost for ever. Rise and receive your reward!

Ahmed. May it please your Enormous Majesty!—no!—I mean, your Great Highness, I can-

not feel at ease in your awful presence, at which the sun withdraws his beams, and the moon turns pale with envy. (Aside. This is what Zittara told me to say.) Most Potent Sovereign, I was a poor cobbler——

Sultan. Never mind what you were; you have benefited your ruler and governor, and have a right to feel at ease in his presence. Take these purses; and tell me further how I can make you happy. Any reasonable reward shall be yours.

Ahmed. Deign to hear me, Most Noble Sovereign! I must again say I was a poor cobbler, and happy in my poverty. Struck with the charms of Zittara, the grand-daughter of Aldeboran, the chief astrologer of the sultan Mahmoud, I married her. She was ambitious,—and after a few months of humble happiness, she declared that if I did not become an astrologer she would be divorced. In an unhappy hour I consented. I have been fortunate in my divinations; but I have no science, and deceit is hateful to me! Even in serving you, I have been false!

Surely you discovered where my treasure lay. By what cunning did you do that?

Ahmed. By my simple reason and the fears of the robbers themselves; no mystical enchantments whatsoever.

Sultan. But how did you obtain your great reputation?

Ahmed. It was spread abroad that I was an astrologer. Many came to confess their sins, actuated by their own fears of discovery. Sometimes I made a lucky guess. Now, good Sultan, take back your reward: I only ask forgiveness, and a divorce from Zittara.

Sultan. If, as you say, your unassisted reason, your native talent, has helped you so far, you will be a valuable addition to my council. In this happy country no one is exempt from royal favour on account of his birth. Slaves, fetch the robes of a Vizier for Ahmed; and if you want a wife, my daughter shall be yours. Take him, Zemirah; and bless the happy star under which you were born, that has led to my court a man who abhors deceit, and who dares to speak the truth, at the risk of losing his life and displeasing his sovereign!

Zemirah (still veiled). My sovereign and father, I obey willingly!



Ahmed. What unheard-of happiness! (Taking Zemirah's hand, he kneels.) You shall be my brightest sun! my honey-moon! my lucky star! my constant planet! my soul! my all! my last!!!

CHORUS.

Oh, be joyful! Oh, be gay!

This is { my second good Ahmed's wedding-day.

Farewell to work, and welcome play;

Long live the happy cobbler!

solo. (Ahmed.)

I've lost my proud and scornful wife— And now shall merrily pass my life; I've gained a princess, good and fair; No joy to mine can e'er compare!

CHORUS.

Oh, be joyful! Oh, be gay!

This is { my second good Ahmed's wedding-day. Farewell to work, and welcome play;

Long live the happy cobbler!

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SOLO.

I've scorn'd the stars and lost the moon, And gained a princess as a boon! I've kick'd my heels and burnt my last, And ne'er again will fortune cast.

CHORUS.

Oh, be joyful! Oh, be gay!

This is

my second
good Ahmed's wedding-day.

Farewell work, and welcome play;

Long live the happy cobbler!

SOLO.

And now, farewell to telling lies About the planets, sun, and skies; I'll worship Venus in *your* eyes, And vow you're quite a *Juno!*

CHORUS.

Oh, be joyful! Oh, be gay! This is good Ahmed's wedding-day. Farewell to work, and welcome play; Oh, happy! happy cobbler!

The above can be sung to the first and second part of an old tune, called "Vulcan's Cave; or, Teddy the Tyler."

Scenes in a Like-time;

OR.

THE DISCOVERED WORLD.

IN TWO ACTS.

Dramatis Personæ.

FERDINAND OF ARRAGON.
CRISTOFERO COLUMBUS.
DON PEDBO.
DON CARLOS.
DIEGO, Son of Columbus.
FATHER FRANCISCO, Two Franciscan Monks.
FATHER JUAN, Two Franciscan Monks.
HERALD.
ISABELLA OF CASTILE.
DONNA INEZ.
DONNA AUGUSTINA MENDOZA, Maid of Honour to the Queen.

The Play occupies a period of Ten Years. Several Years intervene between each Scene.

Two Indians.

Castume.

THE effect of Spanish Costume may be produced by short cloaks, and large white plaited ruffs round the throat; conical hats for the old men; red and black caps with feathers for the young cavaliers; large rosettes on the shoes, slashed sleeves, and white Vandyke cuffs.

The ladies should wear scarfs, fastened at the back of the head, of black lace or silk, for undress; white for full dress.

SCENES IN A LIFE-TIME.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — A room in the Convent of La Rabida, near Palos. The Monks' Refectory. Columbus and two Franciscan Friars seated at a table; food on the table, and eggs.

Father Francisco. Truly, good Senor, your arguments do not convince me. This project of yours seemeth to me a little visionary. It disturbeth my notions. I fear me much it can never agree with the writings of the holy Fathers on matters pertaining to the world and its inhabitants; and still less do I know how to reconcile it with the teachings of the most holy Scriptures.

Columbus. Good Father, if 'tis true—as true it verily seemeth to me—why fear the truth? Truth with truth can never disagree; and visions rest not on facts, as do these, my slowly-formed and now most confidently held opinions.

Father Juan. But, Senor, you ask us to believe too much. What! that this earth is round—round as this pomegranate, and that men and women, such as we, live and walk at our antipodes, their heels upwards and their heads hanging down? By St. Jago di Compostella! That there is a part of the world in which all things are topsy-turvy; where the trees grow with their branches downwards, and where it rains, hails and snows upwards! Ask me not to believe all this, good Senor!

Father F. Sooner could I believe that this egg could be made to stand on-end upon the board, than that such things could be!—See how it rolleth and reeleth on its side!

Columbus. All things are possible with faith, courage, and will! Give me the egg, and it shall stand! (He takes the egg, and striking it forcibly on the table, the end is crushed, and it stands.*

The monks cross themselves in astonishment.)

Father F. The saints defend us! He worketh miracles! Who shall withstand such bold determination! With wits such as these to find out

^{*} The egg must be boiled hard.

means, and courage to act, who can say what difficulties may not be overcome.

Columbus. Ah, my good Father! and when within the breast there speaketh a voice which, by day and night, from infancy to manhood, urgeth me on, telling me that these things shall be done; which, amidst poverty and neglect, faileth not to comfort me; which sayeth unto me—"Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;" which calleth back the bright and golden dreams which fill my brain—if, haply, they should fade—and which, clearing and brightening my vision, sheweth me a path upon yonder bright and trackless ocean, which heaven hath allotted to me to tread, leading to an earthly paradise beyond.

Father J. Holy Virgin! he blasphemeth!

Father F. Not so, brother Juan; the Spirit speaketh within him. It is not the empty dreamer, nor the rash, cunning adventurer who speaketh in such tones, or who possesseth such a lofty bearing. (To Columbus.) Thy language pleaseth me, and still more thy pious, trusting spirit. I will assist thee to the utmost of my means. I have a friend



at the court of our most gracious queen, who will at least gain for thee a hearing. Take thee to Cordova all thy maps and charts, and make a fair statement of thy reasonings and grounds of belief in this most weighty matter; and if there be truth in thy tale, and constancy in thy high endeavour, fear not but that the gracious ear of Isabella will be turned towards thee. And should thy projects please her candid mind, then will her liberal hand supply thee with the means to work them out. I will withdraw, to prepare the necessary credentials with which thou wilt be able to gain access at the court, now assembled at Cordova.

SCENE II.—Don Pedro and Don Carlos, two Spanish cavaliers.

- Don P. Well, my good Senor, so you are returned from court. What news do you bring with you? Are the rejoicings over?
- Don C. No, indeed, nor ever will! Spain will never cease to rejoice over the gain of such a province as Granada; and tournaments and bull-

fights are too much to the taste of the good people of Castile and Arragon, not to make this glorious conquest a pretext for them. I, for my part, am tired of them, and of all the bustle and gaiety of the court, and am glad to turn my face homeward again.

Don P. What! is there nothing new astir! and nothing new the fashion?

Don C. In good truth, now you remind me of it, there is indeed something new at court. 'Tis a poor adventurer, one Columbus by name, a Genoese by birth, who, it seems, has not only turned the head of our most gracious queen, but is crazing the wits of one half the young cavaliers of the court.

Don P. One Columbus, indeed! and who may he be? a rival of the brave Gonzalvo?

Don C. Nay! no soldier is he; but a humble mariner it seems, who, having got into his head that the world is round, (which, may-be you have heard is the notion of some people,) he fancies that by sailing to the westward, he will be able to fall in with the territories of the Great Khan, which, you know, Marco Polo, the great Venetian

traveller, discovered in the East. A truly fantastical notion, it must be said; but it seems that, somehow or other, he has persuaded the queen to listen to his story; and they say, that she is even going to give him assistance in money and ships to prosecute his schemes.

- Don P. The wise and prudent Isabella to be won over by such an ill-founded notion! And who, pray, will he get to join him in such an ill-starred expedition?
- Don C. Why, as I said before, the young gallants of the court are all mad to be enlisted of the party; their empty pates are filled with the notion of reaching some El Dorado, from whence they will be able to return with their doublets as well lined with gold and silver as was Marco Polo's, the Venetian.
- Don P. What! and embarking on the westward sea, run after the sun at sunset, I suppose, and expect to come up with it again at sunrise! Let them take care they do not fall into the fire of the sun, and get roasted—geese, as they are! For my part, I make use of my own eyes;—and can't I see that the earth is as flat as a ducat—and that the sun sinks down behind one edge of

the world, and comes again at the other edge? and as for the antipodes, as they call them,—who will ever make me believe that men could walk on the other side of the world, like flies on the ceiling, their feet sticking to the ground and their heads hanging down. Antipodes, indeed! Topsy-Turvians I should call them!

- Don C. Aye! and supposing there is another side to the world, and that it has inhabitants; it is plain enough to understand that they cannot be men and women like us—Spaniards! Doubtless, they must be horrid monsters of some kind or other: Anthropophagi, or men that have their heads growing beneath their shoulders, and withbut one eye, in the middle of their foreheads. By St. Ignatius! it makes me shudder to think of! Only imagine the flower of Spanish chivalry being munched and swallowed by cannibals, without so much as a leek to flavour them!
- Don P. Ha! ha! Truly that would be worse than falling beneath the walls of Granada, or being taken captive, and put to the torture by the fierce Boabdil. But here comes your daughter, the fair Inez.

 [Enter Donna Inez.

Inez. Dear father! (She stops short on seeing Don Pedro, then curtsies, and Don Pedro kisses her hand.) Dear father, I have come to beg of you to take me to the cathedral. All Seville is hastening to the mass. They say that a party of cavaliers from Cordova has just arrived, on their way to Palos, where they are going to embark in quest of adventure upon the western sea. High mass is to be performed, and prayers are to be said, and offerings made to ensure their safe return.

Don C. The very men we were talking of, Senor! so you see my story was correct. Have you heard mention, my daughter, of one Columbus, a Genoese, who heads the expedition?

Inez. Columbus! Yes! that was the very name—Cristofero Columbus, they called him; a man of noble bearing and majestic presence. I saw him from the balcony, as he crossed the square on his way to mass. Will you not come, dear father! I fain would look upon that lofty brow again!

Don C. Well! shall we go, Don Pedro, and see the bold adventurer—this martyr to a vision—a day-dream?

Inez. Oh, not a martyr! Do not say so! He will return triumphant, I feel assured. He looks too brave to fail.

Don P. "Looks," indeed! Ah, my fair Inez! that is a true woman's reason; "too brave," indeed! We shall see! [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—ISABELLA and FERDINAND seated on a throne, surrounded by Courtiers, &c., &c. A Herald advances.

Herald. May it please your Majesties, an audience is craved by Don Cristofero Columbus, a mariner, who has lately returned from a long and perilous expedition.

Isabella. It is our pleasure that Don Columbus should be admitted. (Enter Columbus, who advances, kneels before the throne, then rises.)

Columbus. Most puissant Sovereigns! Isabella, Queen of Castille, and Ferdinand, King of Arragon,—I appear before you to render an account of the embassage of ships and mariners across the Western Ocean, of which your Majesties were graciously pleased to intrust to me the command.

Isabella. Don Columbus, it rejoiceth us to see thee return in safety. We would gladly hear what hath befallen thee during thy long absence. Speak on!

Columbus. May it please your Majesties,—I have to make manifest, that that which seemed to many but an empty dream, has proved a glorious reality. Under the guidance of the merciful hand of Providence, who, in His good time, seeth fit to reveal the riches of His creation unto His creature, man, I have been the humble instrument by which a fair and goodly region has been discovered, lying far to the westward, of which I have taken possession in your Majesties' names, thereby making, not only a rich and noble addition to the estates of your Majesties, but a great and important increase to the power and glory of the kingdom of Spain.

Isabella. Don Columbus, we are beholden to thee. For thy most welcome and wondrous tidings, we give thee our heartfelt thanks.

Ferdinand. Thy success has exceeded our expectations. We fain would hear more of thy adventures.

Columbus. May it please your Majesties, our course, though successful, has been attended with difficulties and danger. Nothing but my own unwavering faith in my long-formed convictions, and the courage and constancy of some of my followers, could have borne up against the doubts and fears of the many. In this paper your Majesties will find a true and faithful history of all that has befallen us. Of the sorrows and shipwrecks that disabled our little fleet; of the complaining and mutiny of our crews; of the slight indications by which my own faith was upheldthe floating of weeds and fruits, which, after weeks of tedious sailing, told me that land was nigh. Of the carved cane, which spoke of the hand of man; of the moving light, which, in the darkness of the night, announced that we neared an inhabited shore; and at last that blessed morn, which dawned to reveal to our longing eyes the sight of a fair island, which lay before us on the bosom of the waves, crowned with bright verdure, and breathing forth spicy odours. This island, inhabited by a race of dark-skinned, but gentle and happy beings, is but one of a vast archipelago, beyond which, I feel

assured, lies the kingdom Cipango, and the dominions of the Great Khan. We bring back with us, for your Majesties' inspection, samples of the productions of these rich and fertile islands, which abound in mines of gold and silver, and whose soil produces an infinite variety of luscious fruits and aromatic spices. Two of its natives have also voluntarily accompanied us, who will, if your Majesties please, pay their homage to you.

Isabella. Let them advance; we will receive them gladly as our subjects, and grant them our favour and protection. (Two Indians enter, bearing on their heads baskets of fruit, shells, skins, feathers, and specimens of gold and silver ore; they lay these at the feet of the king and queen, and make their obeisance to them. Isabella and Ferdinand inspect the fruit, &c., handing them afterwards to the courtiers, and then present their hands to the Indians, who, at a sign from Columbus, kneel and kiss their hands.)

Isabella. It is as if the dwellers of some distant planet descended to visit us; my heart yearneth towards these young strangers. We will look upon them as our adopted children. We will have

them instructed in the Spanish tongue, and the knowledge of the holy Catholic faith. And as for thee, Columbus, our trusty and well-beloved servant, we know of no reward that in any way suiteth the magnitude of the service that thou hast rendered to us, to our throne, and to the whole world. All Christendom shall resound with the fame of this, thy great and wonderful discovery. (The queen rises.) Be it known to all these present, and let it be duly published and registered, that we confer upon Don Cristofero Columbus the title of Admiral, and constitute him our viceroy over these Western Indies, giving him the undisputed and entire command and government of all the lands. which he has discovered, or which through his means shall be discovered, to the westward of the kingdom of Spain.

Columbus. My gracious Queen! (kneeling) I gratefully accept the command, and to the utmost of my power will faithfully discharge the high and mighty trust. (The curtain falls, the characters remaining in their different positions, en tableau, for a short time previously.)

ACT II.

SCENE I .- Don Carlos and Don Pedro.

• Don P. It grieves me, in good truth, to hear these tidings of the admiral. I had not fancied him a man who would abuse the powers with which he is intrusted. It must have brought sorrow to the kind heart of Isabella, to thus find that her favour has been bestowed on one so unworthy.

Don C. And must it not grieve me, my good friend, to think that I have promised to bestow the hand of my daughter Inez upon the son of this man? I esteemed him one, the greatness of whose actions would cover the meanness of his birth; and now to know that he is disgraced!—recalled! My Inez shall never be united to the son of Columbus, the traitor—the criminal!

Don P. Nay, my good Senor, you carry things too far; I, for my part, cannot believe all these reports, spread by the friends of Oviedo. I cannot believe that one, who once was just and generous, and noble in his views, can have so far forgotten himself. And this Oviedo, too, I like not. He

has a crafty and ambitious spirit, which would be ever seeking his own advancement to the injury of others. It is a pity that Columbus has not contrived to lay his own account of the affair before the queen.

Don C. Aye! that is what an honest, innocent man would have done to clear himself from such charges, as I tell my daughter; whilst she maintains, that consciousness of innocence has prevented Columbus from sending home his justification. But I must speak with Inez;—I must break to her my decision respecting the young Diego. Will you not come and add your arguments to mine?

Don P. I will remind her of the extent of a parent's authority in such matters; but you must allow me to sympathize with the poor young lady!

[Execunt.

SCENE II.—INEZ seated at a table with her guitar on her lap, leaning her head on her hand in a melancholy and sentimental posture.

Attendant. Don Diego Columbus craves to

speak with the lady Inez for a few minutes, on an affair of moment.

Inez (starting up). Oh! why does he come? Does he not know that my father has forbidden him to visit me? But it may be he brings tidings of importance. I must see him;—tell him to come in!

[Enter Don Diego; he kneels and kisses her hand.

Don Diego. Dearest Inez! I am sure you will pardon me this visit, when I tell you, that at last I have received tidings from my dear father. He is returned! He is even now landed in Spain!

Inex (clasping her hands). Landed! oh, happy news! Then all will be right! The good admiral! How I long to see him!

Diego. Nay, but listen, dearest Inez! Hear how he has returned!—Not as the triumphant conqueror—the discoverer of a new world; but as a criminal—a prisoner;—he comes in chains!

Ines. "In chains!" Your noble father in chains! Alas! and have his envious enemies indeed prevailed so far? What can be done?

Diego. There is but one means by which justice can be secured for him, and it is for this that I

seek you, good Inez. My father has found means to transmit to me this paper, containing an account of all the matters between himself and the crafty Oviedo. 'Tis a plain tale, told with unvarnished truth; and let this but reach the eye of Isabella, and I fear not for her heart or her head. Can this be done? Can you assist me in forwarding this paper to the queen?

Inez. I will! I have a friend who is an attendant on the queen, and upon whose kindness I can depend. She will present it to the queen, or gain for me an audience. But why should not the good admiral tell his own tale in person?

Diego. He will do so. On his arrival at Cordova, he will be taken before the queen as a criminal brought for judgment; but the queen must first read this statement, and must be made acquainted with the machinations of his enemies.

Inez. I understand; I see it all! Trust to me, good Diego! your father shall be saved! Truth will prevail, and justice will be done. And now, farewell! (She extends her hand, whilst DIEGO kneels and kisses it; and then both go out on opposite sides.)



SCENE III.—Chamber in the royal palace.

QUEEN ISABELLA seated near a table, DONNA

AUGUSTINA MENDOZA, her lady in waiting,
standing near her, holding a scarf. The QUEEN
is leaning one elbow on the table, in a pensive
attitude.

Donna Mendoza. May a faithful servant ask her beloved mistress what grief hangs heavily upon her heart?

Queen. Truly you may, my favourite friend, and I will place my sorrows in your trustworthy keeping. You know that, in opposition to my courtiers' advice, and even my royal husband's wishes, I gave unlimited power to Admiral Don Columbus, over the newly discovered countries. Of his abilities there can be no doubt; but such power and authority was not meant for a man unused to bear it;—that power and authority he has abused.

Donna M. In what manner? May it please your Majesty to tell me?

Queen. In divers ways, alas! has he shown his

frailty. He has committed an indignity to ourselves, by having appointed our young nobles to duties and services beneath their rank. He has assumed almost regal state;—but these are triffing offences. His wanton cruelty to the Indians I cannot pardon.

Donna M. These charges I am unable to refute; but I hope, nay, I believe, that falsehood has reached the royal ear. It is the fate of greatness to excite envy, and envy claims falsehood as an ally, to seek revenge. How lately have we seen, that the inventors of the divine art of printing were denounced at courts, and treated as dealers in the vilest sorcery. You have ever been the guardian angel of the oppressed; oh! be so still!

Queen. Would that it were so, Augustina! but, alas! the falsehood that reaches a royal ear, is generally of a flattering nature; and this is, I fear, a painful truth.

Donna M. Trust to your own judgment, and rest assured that a favourite has no friends amongst the worthless. Many who accompanied Columbus were not animated by his high resolve, and the

noble ends which he pursued. Gold alone was the glittering prize which they sought; and that failing, they have, perhaps, circulated calumnious reports of the good admiral.

Queen. Whence comes the knowledge which leads you to doubt public documents?

Donna M. I have it from a source you may mistrust—my sweet cousin Inez is betrothed to Diego, the admiral's son;—she has urged me to plead the cause of truth and justice. If my royal mistress would add one favour more to the many already conferred on her humble servitor, permit her to bring Inez to the royal presence? (Donna Mendoza kneels and kisses the Queen's hand.)

Queen. I am afraid this is the cause of love, not of justice. But . . . I will see her . . . Hasten her to our presence! (Exit Donna M.) How much easier it is to pity and forgive, than to maintain laws which are often heavy chains on the hands of royalty. (Inez enters, led in by Donna Mendoza; she kneels at the Queen's feet. Inez has a roll of paper in her hand.)

Inex. Most powerful and much-beloved Queen! I am unable to plead as I ought for one so good

to one so high! Oh! deign to read these words of truth and righteousness! (INEZ offers the scroll, which the QUEEN takes, but does not open.)

Queen. Rise, gentle maiden! (INEZ rises.) I do not doubt but that you have a heart filled with faith and love;—your face bespeaks it. It is, I know, the greatest of earthly trials to believe evil of those whom we have honoured and loved.

Inex. My love for Diego, and the glory of becoming the daughter of the great Admiral, might blind me to his failings, but not to his crimes. The mighty work he has performed has opened our eyes, not only to a new world here below, but he has shown a new world above to the poor Indians. Could one who went forth to convert them, so destroy his holy mission, as to make them hate the name of his generous and Christian sovereigns, Ferdinand of Arragon and Isabella of Castile?

Queen. We are informed that he did!....

Take back this paper! (She returns the scroll.)

I will not read it in private. When the admiral returns and pleads before us, let this memorial, if

it contains important evidence, be presented to me in open court.

Inez. Thanks! thanks! oh, generous Queen! Forgive my presumption! (INEZ kneels.)

Queen. You are forgiven. I honour your zeal; but be not too sanguine. Shameful deeds have been reported to our council. Farewell! (INEZ departs on one side, and the QUEEN and DONNA MENDOZA on the other.)

SCENE IV.—ISABELLA and FERDINAND seated on a throne, &c., as before; courtiers around them.

Herald. May it please your Majesties, Don Columbus, the late Governor of Hispaniola, and Admiral of the Western Ocean, who is brought back to Spain, charged with contempt of your Majesties' royal commands, misrule, and rebellion, awaits your Majesties' good pleasure.

[Herald bows.

Queen. Let the Admiral, Don Columbus, be

brought before us! (Enter Columbus, loaded with chains, and guarded. He stands proudly before the throne. There is a pause of some minutes; Isabella appears distressed at thus beholding him; at last she speaks.) Don Columbus—Admiral,—it grieveth us greatly, that one whom we have ever looked upon as a good and trusty servant, should thus be brought before us. The accusations against thee which have reached our ear, have been unto us a source of great and heartfelt sorrow. Speak, Columbus! We would fain have thy justification and defence!

Columbus. My most gracious Queen! I speak not... for these chains speak! (He extends his arm, and his chains clank. The queen appears greatly affected.)

Ferdinand. We are ready, Columbus, to hear all that thou canst say in thy defence, to exculpate thee from these heavy accusations.

Columbus. May it please your Majesties,—I come not here to defend; but to accuse. With this hand I guided the helm that led to the discovery of a new world! With this hand I brought back riches and power to Spain!! This hand has

unlocked the portals by which the knowledge of a mighty fact has dawned upon the human race; and by which the wondrous productions of a new hemisphere have been poured into the old This hand is chained!!! (Whilst Columbus is speaking, INEZ kneels before the throne, and presents to the Queen a paper, which she reads.)

Queen (rising hastily). It is injustice! It is a great, a crying wrong! There has been fraud and deceit! It never shall be said, that Isabella is harsh towards him who has cast such glory around her throne! Let those chains be taken off!! (An officer unchains Columbus, who advances, and, kneeling, kisses the hand of Isabella; then rising, he stands before the throne.)

Queen. Columbus, my good Admiral, this paper reveals to me all the base conduct of Oviedo, and fully convinces me of thy innocence in certain matters. It is impossible to withstand the voice of truth. The simple statement of the manner in which Oviedo has encroached upon thy authority, and led thee into seeming contempt of our commands, explains to me much that has prejudiced our feelings against one who once possessed our

confidence and trust. Other complaints, however, have reached us. Thou hast been accused, Columbus, of cruelty towards our subjects, the natives of Hispaniola, and other inhabitants of these Western Indies.

Columbus. My gracious Sovereign! even this charge am I enabled to refute. There are here with me two witnesses, who can well speak for me on this point. The two youths who returned to their native country, after learning the language of Spain, have seen the mildness of my rule, and they can speak. (The two Indians advance, and falling at the feet of the Queen, exclaim—Pardon for Columbus! Pardon for the good Admiral!!)

Queen. Our heart, Columbus, most willingly receives this testimony to thy innocence Full justice shall be done thee! Thou shalt be reinstated in thy command! The cruel and crafty Oviedo shall be recalled! . . . Nor this alone . . . Thy son, also, shall be made happy. (To Don Carlos.) Thou canst no longer withhold thy consent to the union of thy daughter with the son of our great Admiral. Where is the fair Inez?

(INEZ advances.) Don Diego Columbus, be but a son worthy of thy most excellent father, and then the most noble blood of Spain need not be ashamed of thy alliance. Even the proudest boast of Ferdinand of Arragon and Isabella of Castile shall be, that their names are united with that of Columbus, the DISCOVERER! (DON CARLOS takes the hand of his daughter, and places it in that of DIEGO. Then the curtain falls.)

The Olive Merchants of Bagdat.

IN TWO ACTS.

Dramatis Personæ.

ALI COGIA, the Olive Merchant.
CODABAD, neighbour to Ali Cogia.
MADOURA, Codabad's Wife.
CALIPH OF BAGDAT.
VIZIER.
CADIGA, a neighbour and friend of Madoura's.
KALED, 1st Merchant.
GARDENEDDIN, 2nd Merchant.
HAUSSAIN, Servant to Codabad.

Children.

ACHMET (Cadi).
ZOHRAB (Codabad).
HASSAN (Ali Cogia).
AYESHA (Madoura).
SCHAH (1st Merchant).
SADI (2nd Merchant).
MESBOUR (Attendant).

Castame.

THE plot of the Olive Merchants of Bagdat is taken from the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." At that period the Persians wore turbans of twisted muslin, with red crowns.

The children introduced should wear tunics of various colours, white trowsers, slippers, and small red caps, fitted closely to the head. Real Indian jars, and any characteristic furniture and decorations, add considerably to the scenic effect.

THE

OLIVE MERCHANTS OF BAGDAT.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The house of Codabad. Codabad and Madoura seated. All Cogia enters.

Ali Cogia. Peace be to your dwelling!

Codabad and Madoura (rising). You are welcome, neighbour, be your purpose what it may.

Ali Cogia (to Madoura, who is going out). The subject of my visit is no secret, Madoura; do not retire: and if it were an important mission, you are of the discreet of woman kind—you babble not in streets; stay, if it please you! (She bows.)

Codabad. Let us take our hookahs. Pray be seated. Your mission?

Ali Cogia. Know, then, my friend, that I have

dreamed dreams! Thrice have I been visited by an awful monitor. I have been reminded that a man of my substance should have other pursuits than that of base lucre; that it was my bounden duty to visit Mecca—the tomb of the Holy Prophet; and when I have arranged my funds, and sold my house, I shall depart.

Codabad. We shall grieve to lose you.

Madoura. We shall grieve to lose you.

Ali Cogia. In the mean time, good neighbours, I must leave in your care a few jars of very rare olives, which I desire to preserve.

Codabad. Friend, they shall be safe; equally removed from the sun's parching rays or the damp's mouldering influence.

Ali Cogia. I thank you for your zealous friendship. When ten bright moons have waxed and waned, may our shadows mingle near this friendly roof. In the mean time, perils will be mine.

Codabad. A less virtuous man than you, Ali, would have held an easy conscience, in the belief that your traffic in Bagdat was a reason for your remaining at home; but for you, Ali, will be reserved a place in the seventh heaven. The houries

of paradise will be your portion, like all the followers of our holy prophet, who forego this world's riches. May your shadow never be less! and may the bulbul sing over your grave!

Ali Cogia. My only regret at leaving Bagdat, is in losing the sight of your friendly countenance. Farewell! May the sun of prosperity ripen your blossoms of happiness!

[To Codabad and Madoura.

Madoura. The prophet will speed thee.

Codabad. The olives in Madoura's care are in your own; she will preserve them with a friend's fidelity. Allah preserve thee!

[Exit Ali; and the curtain falls.

SCENE II.

Cadiga (enters veiled). Are we alone? (She raises her veil.) May the brightness of the morning be thine, Madoura! Is all well with thee?

Madoura. All is well in my own dwelling.

Cadiga. It is so long since I have seen you,

Madoura! Why do you never visit the bazaars now-a-days?

Madoura. My husband makes all my purchases, and my embroidery employs me at home.

Cadiga. All very well; but do you not want some society? Since our old friendly neighbour, Ali Cogia, left Bagdat, we have had no news and no good olives. Pray can you tell me anything of him? Have you heard any of his adventures since his departure for Mecca? His caravan was well supplied, and he was expected back ere this.

Madoura. I know not why he tarries. Ten moons have passed, and no tidings have reached us. Perhaps he has extended his journey to Egypt. They say that is twice as far off as Mecca; but that is a subject too deep and difficult for women to understand.

Cadiga. He promised my husband some balm from Mecca; and he was to bring me the true rose of Sharon. I trust he has not been lost in the desert.

Madoura. So do I! for he was ever a good neighbour, and kind to the poor.

Cadiga. Well, remember, Madoura, that my hus-

band is fourth cousin, twice removed, from old Ali Cogia; and if he left any treasure in your husband's charge, we ought to have our portion.

Madoura. It shall be yours, Cadiga, when you prove that Ali Cogia returns not to Bagdat: whilst he lives, it is his own.

Cadiga. Well, good neighbour, don't look so solemn about it; I had rather have my rose of Sharon, and my old neighbour again, than all the gold of Ophir, provided he brings that balm of Mecca, that is to cure my husband's temper. Farewell, Madoura! I shall go and inquire when a caravan is expected; but there have been awful simooms lately, and many pilgrims have perished.

 $\lceil Exit.$

Madoura. May good news await you, and balm for your anxious fears. [Curtain falls.

SCENE III.

Madoura. I wish, dear Codabad, we could hear tidings of our neighbour, Ali Cogia; it is now more than ten moons since he left for Mecca. He

may be murdered by the Arabs, or covered with sand; or his caravan may have been dispersed by a simoom.

Codabad. It might be so; but more likely some trifling accident, or some difficulty in getting a good camel may have detained him.

Madoura. Well, a little trouble of that kind would make his pilgrimage the more worthy homage to our prophet. I think I see the old bachelor rolling off his camel on the sand—his turban on one side and his sash on the other.

Codabad. Thou art a true woman, Madoura,—no mercy on the old bachelor; but, in good truth, I should like to taste the wonderful olives. It is of no use keeping them.

Madoura. I am afraid they will not long continue good; but still, that is no reason we should take them. They are in my keeping, and, good or bad, no finger must touch nor tongue taste the sacred deposit.

Codabad. Foolish woman! What can be the use of stale olives? I question if they are fit to eat even now. Fetch me a platter; I shall taste them before I'm an hour older.

Madoura. Oh, dearest husband! It ill becomes thy poor ignorant wife to dispute thy sovereign will. 'Tis thine to command, and mine to obey; but my humble sense tells me, that to meddle with anything placed in one's trust, be it even a mouldy olive, is transgressing the law of the holy Koran. Oh! do not urge thy slave to commit sin!

Codabad. Thou mightest have known that the law commands a woman to obey her husband; and her greatest sin is disobedience. For a woman's soul—if she have a soul at all—is saved or lost by her husband's faith alone!

Madoura. I have ever obeyed thee, like a faithful wife, until now. Thy word has ever been my law:—by the love I bear thee, ask me not to do wrong!

Codabad (authoritatively). Leave the apartment instantly, if the duty of obedience be not quite forgotten!

Madoura (going). I fear to leave him: I am bewildered. It seems to be my duty to remain. I am too weak a reed to support his failing strength. Allah forgive him! [She goes.

SCENE IV.

Codabad (alone). Baffled by a woman, indeed! Unhappy day, when women began to think! Where will this presumption end? We shall have women learning to read, I suppose, some day! I should like to know what my respected father would have said, if Soulah, my worthy mother, presumed to differ in opinion with her lord and master! I verily believe, if she had given a twist more or less to his turban, he would have twisted her in a sack, and she would have found a pillow on the mud of the Tigris! I must have some of these olives, if it were only to maintain my dignity.

[He claps his hands. HAUSSAIN enters. Codabad (to HAUSSAIN). Fetch me a blue and white jar, which stands in the cellar, near the bath, and bring with it a large platter. (HAUSSAIN makes a salam, and departs. Codabad smokes, shakes his head significantly, as if disputing with some one, and wishing to support his dignity. Enter

HAUSSAIN, with a jar; he places it, with a platter, before CODABAD, then bows. and exit.)

Codabad (alone). I have no doubt these olives are bad enough; but something of moment must have induced Ali to leave them in our care. Poor fellow! he's dead enough by this time; and, as dead men can tell no tales, and eat no olives, I don't see why live men should not eat them. What a silly fool my wife is! I'll get another wife; and if that doesn't bring her to her senses, I'll get another, and another. Yes, four! that's the lawful number. Sure enough, she has been spoiled by too much indulgence. (All this time CODABAD has been untying the jar: on opening it he exclaims)—Hash, hash! what an odour! What a fogo! Living or dead, Ali could not eat them. They may be better at the bottom. By the leg of mutton that poisoned our holy prophet, what a stench! Amazing! what do I hear? Purses, piastres, dinars! What a lucky day! How very accommodating of Ali, to make himself absent! I thank God I didn't take my wife's advice; as Nasreddin said when he didn't take the quinces, and Tamerlane threw the figs at his bald pate. Allah! Madoura,

your virtue would not have withstood this! (The voice of MADOURA is heard from behind.) It would! it would! (She rushes forward.)

Madoura. Oh! touch not the poison! (She kneels.) Have twenty wives, or kill your poor Madoura! but do not touch Ali's gold! Does not our prophet say, "The sweetest bread is earned by labour; and cursed is he who takes the gold of another!"

Codabad. Begone, Madoura! Begone, I say!
Madoura (going out). Unhappy woman-kind!
who have hearts to feel what is right; but who
have not strength to make others feel the same.

[Exit MADOURA. The curtain falls.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Enter the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, and Giafar. Group of Children playing.

Caliph. Our tour this evening has been profitless. Yonder seems a merry group of children; let us watch their games. As we learn of the bee to lay up our stores, and love from the dove, why should we not gain wisdom from the ways of childhood? Let us rest in this alcove.

[The children advance.

Achmet (coming forward). I tell you what, Zohrab, between ourselves, I think the cadi gave a wrong judgment to-day.

Zohrab. How? When?

Achmet. Why, at that trial about the olives, between Codabad and Ali Cogia. As sure as dates is dates, that Codabad stole his friend's olives and his money.

Zohrab. Indeed, Achmet, what makes you think so?

Achmet. Why, I thought so myself; and when I told father all about it, why, he thought so too. Ali Cogia said he would petition the caliph; and I hope the caliph will call in some olive merchants to see the olives. Come, it will be good fun to act a trial, and I will be the cadi. Who will be Codabad?

Zohrab. I will, as it is only sham.

Achmet. Who will act as Madoura?

Ayesha. I will; because she has very little to say.

Achmet. Who will be Ali Cogia?

Hassan. I; because I like to be a good man.

Achmet. Then you, Schah and Sadi, you must be the merchants; and you, little Mesrour, you shall be my attendant. Fetch me my musnud! (authoritatively.)

Hassan. What are we to do for olives?

Ayesha. Oh, anything will do to make believe; stones or nuts, and this basket will do for a jar.

[ACHMET seats himself, whilst Mesrour arranges the parties:—plaintiff on one side, defendant on the other.

Achmet (as cadi). Come forward, Ali Cogia,

and inform me what complaint you have to make against Codabad. Of what do you accuse him?

Hassan (as Ali Cogia). Most worthy deputy of the commander of the faithful, feeling it my duty to visit the tomb of our holy prophet, I sold all my stores, and prepared to leave Bagdat. Before I departed, I left in charge of him, whom I believed to be my friend, my two remaining jars of olives. My return was delayed: I felt a desire to see more of the world. After leaving Mecca, I travelled to wonderful foreign parts: to Egypt, which you know is in Cairo, (the cadi bows assent,) and to China, on the banks of Jerusalem. (ACH-MET bows again.) This took me near twenty moons; and when I returned to Bagdat, I called upon my friend for my olives. He gave me these jars-my own jars; but the olives were not those I left in them. I therefore accuse Codabad of having stolen my olives.

Achmet. These olives look good. What reason have you for not being satisfied with these jars of fresh olives?

Hassan. May it please your Greatness, they are not my olives; but I had placed at the bottom

of the jars fifty dinars, and they are no longer there. I believed that I had left them in the care of a friend; and his wife also promised to preserve them for me.

Achmet. Madoura, what do you know of these blue jars?

Ayesha (as Madoura). I know, please your Sacred Majesty,—I can affirm that they are the very same jars which Ali Cogia gave into my husband's care.

Achmet. But the olives, woman! What do you say of the olives?

Zohrab (as Codabad). I dread that woman's tongue!

Ayesha. Alas, mighty sire! I am as ignorant of old olives and new olives as the trees on which they grew.

Achmet. I forgive thee on consideration of thy ignorance. Retire! Now, Codabad, what have you to say in your defence?

Zohrab (bowing very low). By the mighty prophet! I have restored the jars as they were left in my care; and I moreover denounce Ali Cogia as a villain and a liar, for accusing me of theft,

and for asserting that a few mouldy olives were fifty dinars.

Achmet. Oh, oh! Codabad! So the olives were mouldy! Mesrour, call up the two best olive merchants of the city of Bagdat. Men who have grown grey in good reputation and fair dealing.

Schah (1st olive merchant; he bows).

Achmet. You are here to give your true and faithful testimony, as to the age of these olives. Of what year's growth are they?

Schah. Most noble representative of our dearly beloved Caliph, I do pronounce, by the evidence of my bodily organs, by my proboscis, vulgarly called a nose, and by the windows of my brain, commonly called eyes, and by that little tasty member, familiarly denominated a tongue, that these olives which I hold in my hand, and see, and smell, and taste, are olives of the last harvest, newly gathered and salted; and that they could not have been placed in Codabad's care twenty moons ago, is as clear as mud; as Pharaoh said when the Nile overflowed!

Achmet. Your remarks are most luminous, and of sweet-smelling savour. Now advance, second



merchant! What have you to say? (The second merchant advances, and smells, tastes, and looks at the olives, and smacks his lips.)

Sadi. May it please your eminence, if you were to place before me a platter of olives twenty moons old, and said, "Eat," I should decline the invitation; but if, sire, on the contrary, you were to say to me, "Take a platter of these olives for your supper;" I should say, "Most noble sire, I am grateful for your bounty;" and I should eat them as olives of this year's gathering. They may just be one month, two days, twenty-three hours and fifty-nine minutes old; but not more!--for my palate and my eye have never been questioned for beauty and accuracy. I am not easily deceived! and I maintain that seeing is believing; as king Solomon said, when queen Sheba showed him the flowers! Bows, and exit.

Achmet. I perceive but too clearly, Codabad, that you have sinned, and are no longer worthy to be called a citizen of Bagdat. I shall present the case to the caliph; your goods will be sold to pay back the fifty dinars to Ali Cogia; and I have no doubt that the caliph will banish you for life to

the khan of Tartary! (ZOHRAB tears his hair, AYESHA does the same; the rest all cry "Hurrah! Long life to the cadi, ACHMET!") [Exit children.

SCENE II.—Enter Caliph and Giafar.

Caliph. Well, Giafar, we may learn from the sports of children. We will have this case tried in our presence. That little cadi is a clever fellow; we must make use of his wit.

Giafar. Commander of the Faithful! thy goodness, like the sun, fertilizes even arid soil. The events of the meanest of thy subjects minister to the glory of thy empire.

[Exit Caliph and courtier.

SCENE III.—MADOURA, alone.

Madoura. Why have women hearts? I have often thought we were not created to be slaves. Allah forgive, if it be a sin to think so! How often have I wished that I could help my husband

to increase his stores by honest means! . . . Ah me! . . . The prophet says that women have no souls! (In a low voice.) What is it, then, that tells me that my husband has sinned? and what makes me feel. I could not have done such an act-even to obtain his love? And that I do love him is but too, too certain. He has ever been kind to me, and has had no second wife to share his love with me. The caliph has announced his intention of hearing the cause of Ali Cogia, and I am summoned to attend. How can I make my words answer my feelings of justice, and my love and duty to my husband? I cannot betray him;-1 cannot say the thing that is not true. May the spirit within teach and guide me! . . . Why was I born a woman and a slave? Exit.

SCENE IV.—A Judgment Hall. CALIPH and attendants. ALI COGIA, CODABAD, MADOURA, and others.

Caliph. I find, Ali, by the paper I hold in my hand that, on your return from Mecca, you applied

to Codabad for some jars of olives which you had deposited in his care.

Codabad (interrupting him). Please your Mightiness, I returned them safe and sound.

Caliph. Silence, slave! It is true you returned him two jars of olives; but Ali Cogia affirms that the jars were his, but not the olives. He considers that the cadi gave a false judgment; and he appeals to my justice. Codabad, you are now called upon for your defence. Do you assert that these are the olives intrusted to you by Ali Cogia?

Codabad. Yes! most just, most merciful, and wonderful Caliph! the worthy minister of our holy prophet. Truly, I certify they are the olives—the very olives which Ali consigned to my care.

Caliph. Advance, Madoura! (MADOURA comes forward, reluctantly.) What do you know about these olives? (MADOURA bows, but does not answer.) Woman! I command you to give me all the information you possess! (MADOURA still bows in silence.) Your silence, woman, can avail you nothing; indeed, it excites a suspicion against you and your husband. (MADOURA still silent.) Giafar, take that misconducted woman under your

charge! Ali Cogia, come forward! What reason have you for knowing that these olive jars are not in the same state as when you left them?

Ali Cogia. May it please the Commander of the Faithful to believe, that I not only left two jars of olives in Codabad's care; but I placed within them a packet containing fifty dinars. The dinars are gone, and the olives are changed; and this I can affirm on the faith of a true believer.

Caliph. Before I call up the evidence, I wish to make known to my people here assembled, that I am indebted to some of the humblest of my subjects, for the means of discovering the truth. I do not wish to conceal from you, that to this youth (pointing to ACHMET) I owe a valuable hint. He suggested, in his sport, that I should call up some olive merchants as witnesses.

Codabad (aside). I am lost!

Caliph. Come forward, Kaled! the first olive merchant of the city of Bagdat. (KALED advances.) Inspect, smell, taste these olives, Kaled, and tell me their age! (KALED looks at, smells, and tastes the olives very significantly.)

Kaled. Commander of the Faithful! it is not

for me to boast of my own accomplishments, but I must humbly say, that you could not have consulted a better judge in your own dominions;—no, nor do I believe the whole world affords a better nose, eye, or palate! My exquisite nose has descended, in a direct line, through a race of olive merchants, all famed in their day; and my experience proclaims, in spite of Codabad's assertion, that these olives are of the last harvest.

Caliph. You may retire. Gardeneddin, examine this fruit, and give your opinion of its age.

Gardeneddin. Mighty Monarch of the World! I would not presume, after what my fellow-tradesman has asserted, to speak boldly of my talent. It is with diffidence, but with truth I assert, that my most remote ancestor cultivated olives in the Garden of Eden; whereof I retain the remembrance, in the name of Gardeneddin, which is, more properly, Garden-Eden, or Eden-Garden! Whatever Kaled may assert of the sensibility of his nose, the acuteness of his eye, and exquisiteness of his palate, I assure you, mine are infinitely more sensitive, acute, and exquisite. You perceive, he says that these olives are of the last har-

vest;—I can inform you, that they have not been salted three weeks.

Caliph. You may retire.

Codabad. I am undone!

Caliph. It is now evident to all here, that Codabad has robbed his friend of his dinars. I therefore pronounce sentence on him. Let his property be sold to pay the amount; but, as a signal mark of displeasure at this flagrant breach of friendship and the laws of the prophet, I decree that he be banished five hundred leagues from the city of Bagdat, with his dumb wife, who aided and abetted in the theft.

Codabad. Indeed, indeed, my Sovereign, she never did! She urged me with all the sense a woman can command; she conjured me, by her love, to leave untouched the pledge of my friend. Would that I had listened to her words! But I was a villain!

Caliph. This tardy confession is a gleam of goodness. It is a pity your wife cannot speak, and tell you so: she then shall be free from your punishment; and as you so little merit so good a woman, leave her in Bagdat for a better man!

Madoura (running forward). Oh! do not cause my death! He has been ever kind to me! I will not part from him! Oh! be merciful, good Caliph!

Caliph, Yes, Madoura, I will be merciful! I will allow Codabad to be bettered by your influence. Retire beyond the walls of Bagdat. Make a pilgrimage to Mecca. The prophet has said, "Whoso worketh good, male or female, shall enter paradise."

Madoura. Women may have souls! I'll think on this.

Caliph. Here, Madoura, take this as a mark of my approbation. (The Caliph gives her a chain from his own neck.) The wisest of men has said, "Seest thou a virtuous woman; her price is above rubies." (Codabad and Madoura make profound bows and retire on one side.)

Caliph. Boys, come to the seraglio: you shall have a feast. You, Achmet, shall be cadi, some day.

Achmet. Long live the caliph, Haroun Alraschid!

Ali Cogia. May he live a thousand years!

Kaled. May Haroun live for ever!

Gardeneddin. May the sun shine for ever on his path!

All. Hurrah! Hurrah!

The following words were adapted to a quartette from Winter's opera of "The Interrupted Sacrifice," arranged by Hawes, with English words, and entitled, "The Maid who'd wish to slumber:"—

Let mercy, truth, and justice, With peace and virtue reign; For mercy, truth, and justice, Bring pleasure in their train.

CHORUS.

Long live Haroun, Allah! Long live Haroun, Allah!

Let him who'd wish to slumber,
With ease and quiet bless'd,
Of pleasures without number,
And every joy possess'd—
A welcome give to truth!
A welcome give to truth!

To pass the day in sorrow,

The night in sighs and tears;

To dread the coming morrow,

As one of doubts and fears:

Oh, this it is to cheat!

Oh, this it is to cheat!

[They point at CODABAD.

From ev'ry hour to borrow
Fresh pleasures, that ne'er cloy;
To await the coming morrow—
A harbinger of joy—
A welcome give to truth!
A welcome give to truth!

Let mercy, truth, and justice,
With peace and virtue reign!
For mercy, truth, and justice,
Bring pleasure in their train.
Long live Haroun, Allah!
Long live Haroun, Allah!

[The curtain falls.

Zara;

OR,

"HOME IS HOME, BE IT EVER SO HOMELY."

IN TWO ACTS.

Dramatis Personæ.

THE CALIPH, HAROUN ALRASCHID.
GIAFAR, Vixier to the above.
ABDALLAH, a Peasant.
MARGIANA, Wife to Abdallah.
SELIM, Son to Abdallah.
ZARA, Daughter to Abdallah.
BADORA, Sister to the above.
AMIMA, Sister to Zara.
LEILA, an Attendant in the Caliph's palace.
Attendants on the Caliph.

The Scene is at and near Bagdat.

Castame.

THE turban, in the form we represent it, is never worn by females in the East. The head is covered; but generally with a *toque* of silk, with pendant ends, fringed either with gold or jewels.

The robe is confined at the waist with a girdle of silk or jewels, according to rank.

A turban with an aigrette, is the dress of the highest rank in male costume.

ZARA.

ACT I.

SCENE I—Enter the Caliph Haroun Alraschid and his Vizier, Giafar.

Giafar. Here! oh Commander of the Faithful, you may repose beneath this willow, and enjoy the cool breeze from the Euphrates, whilst you indulge your taste by viewing, in disguise, the habits of this humble family; and I think you will acknowledge that perfect content may be found in the dwelling of the poor and simple.

Caliph. It is a tempting spot, and we will rest awhile; but I think, good Giafar, the content you speak of arises from ignorance of better things, rather than that of choice. (The Caliph and Giafar retire to a recess. Enter Zara, Selim, Badora and Amima.)

Zara. (speaking as she enters). Haste, dear Badora, and stone the dates; we have scarcely

time to prepare the supper. Go, Amima, and feed the kids; and you, Selim, help me to prepare the figs and olives, and cool the room.

Selim. I am afraid we shall pay dearly for staying so long in Bagdat, if we have not our mother's supper ready.

Zara. Yes, dear Selim: but who could forbear staying to see the grand show? How beautiful the Princess must be!

Selim. And how happy too !—She must be as light as the genius of air, for her bearers seemed quite cool.

Zara. Not so light-hearted as we are, dear Selim—at least so mother says. Some old Sultan wants to have her for his son's wife, and her father is obliged to part with her. She will be sent away to Grand Cairo, or Egypt, or Bussora, or China, or some other great great city. I am glad I am not a rich princess, or I might have to leave you, Selim.

Solim. Wait till you are tried, Zara. If the Caliph should come here to-morrow (and they say that he does go about in disguise, to find out what his people say of him); I say if the Caliph should

come here and ask you to go and live like a princess, you would not refuse, I know.

Zara. Perhaps I might not; but it does not follow that I am not happier here.

Selim. Only think, Zara, instead of sprinkling the floor with water, you would be lying on a soft couch, and Cassam or Bacharack would be fanning you. Instead of boiled pease for supper, you would have cream tarts, iced sherbet, conserve of bamboo and pomegranate. Leila, the sweetest singer in Bagdat, would be singing you to sleep.

Zara. Oh! Selim, is not the bulbul in the grove equal to any singer in Bagdat? and the boiled pease you pretend to despise, how sweet we shall think them with the cakes my mother has made for us! Do not try to make me discontented and ungrateful.

Selim. Ungrateful! Allah forbid! but I so often think you would make a beautiful princess. It is because I love you so much that I wish to see you grander and richer.

Zara. And happier too? Oh no; you know better than that Selim.—I see my father and mother coming; let us meet them. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—CALIPH and GIAFAR advance.

Caliph. I am tempted, Giafar, to find out if this little maiden would be satisfied with her lot if she knew what luxury was, and if she had ever tasted of the delights of refinement. I will send for her to the palace to-morrow.

Giafar. Monarch of monarchs! thou hast ever permitted thy faithful Giafar to speak forth his presumptuous thoughts:—may he ask of the Commander of the Faithful, if it would not be cruelty to rob this happy family of their content?

Caliph. Truly, good Giafar, thy rebuke is just; but if my trial fails to change the pretty Zara, she will be the happier for her trial; and if gratified by luxury, I will ensure her the enjoyment of it as an attendant on the princess.

Giafar. Poor Zara! How bitterly do I repent of bringing the Caliph here! (Aside.)

SCENE III.—Enter GIAFAR and Attendants of the Caliph in the dwelling of Abdallah.

Abdallah. What means this visit? (Aside.)

Surely the Sultan has no cause of offence against the humblest of his slaves. (Making a salam.)

Giafar. Fear not, good Abdallah, the Caliph has visited thee with his favour. He has seen the lovely Zara, and he desires to bestow upon her all the good things her beauty and her goodness merit. He wishes to set thy sparkling gem in gold.

Abdallah. I dare not murmur. I hear not of favour! Mine ears only tell me that I must lose my child. (He weeps.) Pardon my grief, respected Giafar.

Giafar. I am authorized by our ever-merciful Caliph to assure thee, that if it grieves thy heart to separate, that the next moon shall see thy daughter with thee again, if, in her new dwelling, happiness be not her portion.

Abdallah. Allah bless thee for those words! As the dew-drops of heaven restore the fading flower, so have those words revived my withering heart. Zara, come hither! The mighty Caliph, Haroun Alraschid, Commander of the Faithful, hath showered his blessings upon thee. He would make thee like that fair princess whose glorious train thou hast watched to-day.

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Zara. Dear father, what do I hear? Must I leave you all? Would you tear the clinging plant from its palm-tree? (Embracing him.)

Abdallah. 'Tis even so, Zara; but if thine eyes be not dazzled with the brilliancy around them, they may see to guide thee, in one moon, back to the humble dwelling and the arms of thy loving father; but I fear——

Zara. Oh! fear not, dear father. If I am permitted by our gracious Sultan to return to thee again, I am thine!

Abdallah. Go then, Zara, and bid farewell to thy beloved mother, and to thy companions. (Exit Zara.) The all-gracious Caliph knows not the treasure I resign;—one kind word from her, is to me of more value than the brightest ruby of his aigrette. I will attend you, most noble Giafar, and proceed to Bagdat with my beloved child.

[Exeunt omnes.]

SCENE IV.—Apartment in the Palace—ZARA on a couch surrounded by Attendants.

Zara. And this is called pleasure—happiness.

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I am a prisoner in mind and body:—my hands are useless, and my feet only serve to take me from one couch to another. I may not chase the fire-fly in the dusk of the evening, nor train my roses round the trellis, nor feed the pretty doves that fly to my feet. I have watched the waning moon, and no longer can I see it rise above the minarets. Soft is my couch, but softer far my pillow with Amima. Sweet are the perfumes around me, but sweeter far the blossoms round the alcove in Selim's garden. The songs of Leila are delightful, but how much more joyous are the songs of the bulbul in the grove near my own dear home! I am more weary here, where every one attends upon me, than I ever was on the warmest day in gathering dates and olives, or watering our courts; but then the dates were for Amima, or the olives for Badora, and I prepared the room for my father and mother. [Enter Leila.

Leila. The most beauteous of princesses hath sent her slave, Leila, to sing to thee: will her note be pleasing to thee?

Zara. Yes, sweet Leila, in hearing thee time passes more quickly. [Leila sings.

Song.—"Home, sweet Home."

'Midst pleasures and palaces
Though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble
There's no place like Home.

Home! Home! Sweet, sweet Home, &c.

A charm from the skies
Seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek through the world,
Is ne'er met with elsewhere.
Home! Home! Sweet, sweet Home, &c.

An exile from home
Splendor dazzles in vain!
Oh! give me my lowly thatch'd
Cottage again!
The birds singing gaily
That came at my call;
Give me them with my peace of mind,
Dearer than all.

Home! Home! &c.

Zara (weeping). 'Tis too much! Oh, Leila, I can scarcely bear that!—but 'twas kindly meant. Why does it give me pain? Hark! I hear my mother's step! Oh, welcome, welcome! (Listening.) The Caliph is true to his promise.

[Enter MARGIANA.

Margiana Where is my beloved Zara? (She bows formally to ZARA.) Fair princess, I am come to fetch my daughter!

Zara (running to her). Oh, mother! is it thus? Have you forgotten your child? Take off this veil! (Tearing off her head-dress.) Take all these gaudy trappings! (Throwing off her ornaments.) And this! and this! Who would wear jewels? [Enter Caliph.

Margiana (turning and bowing low to the CALIPH). Pardon, oh, Monarch of monarchs, the idle words of my child! She was not born for such greatness.

Caliph. Yes, good Margiana, she was born for greater things. (Turning to ZARA.) Oh! I perceive, my humble-minded Zara, that luxury has not blinded thine eyes or corrupted thy heart; but perhaps these gorgeous things might

please thee at home? Choose what thou wilt, excellent Zara, before thou departest. Take with thee some mark of our favour—clothes or jewels—what thou wilt. (This will try her to the utmost. Aside.)

Zara. If such be thy good pleasure, Commander of the Faithful, I will take for Amima the white doves I have watched; the silver pheasants for Badora; the butterfly-flowers for Selim; and for my father, some of those richer dates that come from Egypt. May Allah preserve thee for a thousand years!

Caliph. They are thine, Zara. Thou owest me no thanks. (To GIAFAR.) Let it be recorded, that the Caliph of Bagdat learned wisdom of a country girl! He learned that riches do not always confer happiness; and that they cannot supply the place of sympathy and love!

[The curtain falls.

Abdulla;

OR,

THE PIOUS PEASANT OF KHORASSAN.

IN TWO ACTS.

Dramatis Personæ.

ABDULLA, a Peasant.
ZEEBA, Wife to the above.
FATIMA, Children of the above.
YUSUPH, REIS MEROOKA, the Master of Abdulla.
DJESREED, a Merchant.
MIDRAUB, a Beggar.
SHAH ABBAS THE GREAT, King of Persia.
FAROON, Visier to the above.
Attendants.

The Scene is laid in and near Ispahan.

Castnme.

The plot is adapted from a tale in "Malcolm's Sketches of Persia." The dress of the Persians of the present day has the ordinary oriental character, with the exception of the fez, which is now generally worn instead of the turban; the crown is of cloth, generally red, of a conical shape, sometimes erect, sometimes long and pendant. A band round the head of fur, or, for those of higher rank, embroidered with jewels.

The costume of all ranks is the same as to form, and different only in material.

ABDULLA.

ACT L

SCENE I.—ZEEBA and her Children at work in an humble cottage.

Zeeba. This, dear Fatima, is your father's birthday; and this day ten years ago, he entered on the service of our good Reis. I am impatient for Abdulla's return. I trust that his servitude is ended, and that he will begin to work for more than food and clothing. 'Tis true that we have all we need to clothe and feed us; but still we are very like slaves. Your dear father is so beloved and respected that I am sure he might be an overseer, and have good wages. . . . But he will soon be here; the long shadow of the date-tree tells me he will soon return; and we must prepare a little feast. (To FATIMA.)

Fatima. Come, Yusuph, and gather our best Busrah dates and ripest bananas; some of the walnuts of the mountains, too; and I will cut a water-melon. Oh dear! oh dear! here is father before his time!

[Enter Abdulla.]

Abdulla. Zeeba, I am a happy man! Our noble Reis has rewarded me for all my service; he has bestowed upon me twenty piasters; he has appointed me overseer, and given me permission to make holiday, and take a journey to Mesched. These are my riches; and all for thee!

[Gives money to ZEEBA.

Zeeha. All for me! Twenty piasters! Why, I shall be as rich as the Caliph of Bagdat, or the Great Mogul. But say not all for me! (She gives the money back.) I have no pleasure that you and Fatima and Yusuph do not share. But, oh! dear Abdulla! Mesched is at the end of the earth. Thou wilt be lost in the desert, covered with sand, or destroyed by wild beasts.

Fatima. Oh, dear father! don't go; you will be torn in pieces by a lion.

Yusuph. Father could run faster than a lion; but I am afraid a tiger will pounce upon him.

Abdulla. Your fears are vain; Mesched is only seven forsckhs distant. Call me before dawn; and then, before the heat of the day, I shall pray at the shrine of the holy Imaum Mehdee, and there deposit the fifth of my wealth. I shall then proceed to the bazaar of Mesched; and what shall I buy for thee? Kibaubs, Fatima?

Fatima. Oh dear, no, father! buy Yusuph a little camel, or a mule, and a scimitar.

[Exit FATIMA.

Abdulla. Well, Zeeba, what must I bring from the bazaars?

Zeeba. If I could look handsome in my husband's eyes, I should like to have a silken vest, or a scarf of the gold cloth of Damascus; but pray get a handsome fez for yourself.

Abdulla. Thy gentle eyes are more pleasing to me than jewels; and thy bright hair lovelier than the gold of Damascus; but I shall like to bring thee some token of my affection—some remembrance of my journey. What say'st thou to a tunic of Delhi silk, or a shawl from Cashmere? Fatima shall have a pair of golden slippers, and a kerchief of mohair. (FATIMA enters with a tray,

and places it on the floor, and spreads small carpets.)

Abdulla. Thanks, dearest child! but I feel no desire to eat. Let us all go to rest.

[Exeunt omnes.

SCENE II.—DJESREED, the Merchant, seated, smoking; his wares hung round the room. ABDULLA enters.

Abdulla. Good merchant, show me the most beautifully embroidered silk of Damascus, for my lovely Zeeba.

Djesreed. Why, my good fellow, if your money is as great as your ambition, I can sell you some made by the Caliph's own silk-worms.

Abdulla. Silk-worms, indeed! That won't do for my Zeeba. I must have silk made of sunbeams and peacocks' wings!

Djesreed. An odd customer, truly. (Aside.) Well, then, here is a piece of embroidered sunshine, with stripes of the last new rainbow; and another of beetles' wings and fire-flies. Will that suit you?

Abdulla. No! Let this vest be mine, and these slippers, and this pouch. Pack up the goods: here is the money.

Djesreed. Two piasters! Well, you are a pretty fellow! a hundred would'nt pay for them.

Abdulla. A hundred piasters such as these?

Djesreed. Yes, indeed! (He takes the piasters from the hand of ABDULLA, and throws them away. ABDULLA picks them up.) What did you come rumpling my goods for? Begone to your Zeeba and your Fatima; and tell them to spend their money to buy brains for the head of the family! Go and buy stale cakes, kibaubs, and black sugar for your booby children. (The merchant pushes ABDULLA out. Exeunt both.)

SCENE III.

Abdulla. I'll try no more. They all insult me! No, Yusuph, no steed for you. He would sell me the tail of a jack-ass for two piasters! Impudent fellow! What vile extortioners are mercers, and horse-dealers, and gold-slipper makers!

Farewell, Mesched. I shall shake off the dust from my feet. [Enter a Beggar.

Midraub. Charity! Charity! He that giveth alms shall be provided for; and he that lendeth to the Lord shall be paid a hundred fold. My supper must be thy gift. (To Abdulla.)

Abdulla. Here, poor sufferer, take half my wealth; my dear Zeeba will forget her disappointment when I tell her that I have given to the aged and starving; when I tell her that I have given to the poor and lent to the Lord. If I am not paid a hundred-fold, my health and strength will increase by good deeds. Instead of cloth of gold, she will be covered with blessings. (He gives the Beggar several piasters.) [Exit Abdulla.

Midraub. Paradise and pardon will be the lot of him that giveth charity. Good deeds are the grey hairs of man. Deceit and ashes cover the miser; flowers will grow over the grave of the alms-giver.

[Exit ABDULLA. Enter REIS MEROOKA.

Midraub. Noble Reis! be pleased to shed the dew of Heaven on my poverty, and fruit shall ripen therefrom! Yonder labourer has given me from his small store.

Reis Merooka. Has the poor Abdulla, whom I passed, bestowed his charity? Such gift must be twice blessed. He has but little to call his own.

Midraub. Not only has he given me four piasters, but, in the early dawn, before the sun had drunk the dew, I beheld him at the shrine of the holy Imaum Mehdee; there he bestowed in the coffer of the poor four piasters, and then proceeded to Mesched. Allah showered blessings on his servant, and sostened his heart towards me, the poorest of his worshippers.

Reis Merooka. Pass on, Midraub. I know that thou, although a beggar, art richer than Abdulla. He spareth for himself when he giveth to the poor. (Exit Beggar. Merooka, musing.) I am now convinced that the good Abdulla is proof even against the temptations of gold. He is worthy of a better fate. Age unfits me for my duties. I will apply to Faroon, the Vizier of the great Shab Abbas, and tell him that the light of his countenance ought to shine on this, the humblest of his servants. I believe no gold would

tempt him from his duty. Truly doth Allah place virtue in lowly places, as he puts gold and diamonds in the lowest depths of the earth. And shall we not bring both to the light of day? Mahomet his Prophet hath said it. [Exit Reis.

SCENE IV.—ZEEBA and FATIMA at work.

Zeeba. The hour has arrived for your dear father's return. I trust he will not be wearied with his burthen. A silk vest is light, and he can ride Yusuph's mule when he is tired.

Fatima. Already, dear mother, I see my new slippers: they are crimson worked with golden flowers. [Yusuph runs in.

Yusuph. Father! Father is coming at last; but I see no mule, and he has nothing in his hand; and he looks tired. (They all run out to meet ABDULLA, and bring him in, looking harassed and tired.)

Abdulla (embracing them). My love is all I have for you. I will tell you my adventures; but I am faint. [FATIMA and YUSUPH run out.

Zeeba. Lie down. You look ill. We are only too glad to have you back again! (FATIMA returns with a plate of dried fruit and bread, and Yusuph with an old pair of slippers.)

Fatima. Never mind us. Eat and be strong again.

Yusuph. These are better than golden slippers. [He stoops down to put the slippers on.

Zeeba. Before you relate your adventures, drink this. (ABDULLA drinks. Whilst he talks, the children hand him small cakes and fruit.)

Abdulla. I should not have been so tired if I had not been illtreated.

Zeeba.
Fatima.
Yusuph.
Illtreated! Allah forbid!

Abdulla. Well, my dear lives; I left you as the sun was just dawning over the mountains; and when the morning was still cool I reached the holy shrine of Mehdee, the descendant of our blessed Prophet.—There stood a venerable priest reading the Koran. Never before had I felt so awestruck. When I had recovered my speech, I demanded humbly if I might proceed. "Enter,

my brother," said the sanctified man. You know, dear lights of my life, that my money was not wanted for our existence; I therefore placed four piasters on the shrine,* and with fresh strength I proceeded to Mesched. No sooner did I enter that great city than I was confounded by the vast multitude. I seemed to lose my senses. Such splendid trains of camels and mules! The bazaars dazzled my sight, and everything seemed to shine with the brightness of stars and the glorious sun. As I gazed I was pushed about as if I myself had been a camel or an obstinate mule. Sickened with the sights, I resolved to return to home and peace, as soon as I had procured you your presents.

Fatima. Yusuph. Thank you, good father!

Abdulla. Alas! you have nothing to thank me for. I entered a bazaar and offered two piasters for a vest. The money was thrown at me, with insults I will not repeat.

Fatima. To you, father?

Abdulla. Even so. I learned this by my visit * True believers deposit a fifth of their money on a shrine.

to a great city;—people who have much money despise those who have a little.

Fatima. Yusuph. Then we won't wish for a little.

Abdulla. Nor for much, dear children. My success with the horse-dealers was no better. I left with a heavy heart, and I felt how much better it was to have no money than to have many piasters and despise our fellow-men, or to have few and be the despised. I had resolved to return without any gauds for you, when I met a poor beggar. He exclaimed, "He that giveth to the poor shall be repaid a hundred-fold!" I gave him my all.

Fatima. All?

Yusuph. Then you will have, some day, more than one hundred piasters!

Abdulla. No, my children! I do not so interpret the Prophet's words. Allah pays not men in piasters. He pays them in good feelings; and the happiness I now feel repays me a hundred-fold the worth of my piasters. But I have not told you what I saw which astonished me.

Fatima. Lions and tigers?

Yusuph. Droves of mules? Zeeba. Lovely princesses?

Abdulla. None of these; but a long, long train—a caravan going to Mecca, of immense length. I made my salams, and gave the hadjees my offering to the shrine of our blessed Prophet; and I felt as if my children had sacrificed their pleasures for the poor pilgrims. And you, too, my wife, I shall see you clothed with good deeds instead of a silken vest. Remember the call to prayer. Farewell. (Exeunt Fatima and Yusuph.) How blest are we, dear Zeeba! our children are innocent and happy. Truly, I am paid a hundred-fold! [ABDULLA and Zeeba exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Fatima (running in). Yusuph! Yusuph! Mother! Oh, mother!

Yusuph (runs in). What is amiss, dear sister? Fatima. Oh, dear Yusuph! father has been carried off by officers, and taken to prison.

Yusuph. What can you mean? Tell me all you know!

Fatima (out of breath). I went to the plantation to look for father; he was so late. I mounted on the hill and looked down on the valley; there I beheld, afar off, the Reis and his officers making father mount a camel; and then they all rode off, and took father away. And then I met Gusraf, who was coming to tell mother that Reis Merooka had carried off Abdulla to Mesched, and perhaps he would be taken to Ispahan. I could hear no

more. Father cannot be home to-night; and he, Gusraf, does not know when he will ever come back. We must go to Mesched, and try to get father out of prison, Yusuph.

Yusuph. Do you think they would let me be put in his place?

Fatima. Or me? But we are so little! Could we not contrive to make ourselves look tall? Stay, Yusuph—I've a good thought—I'll put on father's best cloak and turban. (She fetches them from the side of the room.) Now, Yusuph, lift me up; cover your face over with the cloak. (He lifts her.) Oh, put me down—I am too tall! That is too tall for any man: I could reach the door. I thought father was twice as big as I. That won't do. Oh dear, oh dear! what shall we do? (She whispers to Yusuph. They spread their carpets for prayer and prostrate themselves. Enter Zeeba. She advances and places a hand upon the heads of her children.)

Zeeba. May Allah bless ye, my children; worthy are ye of your pious father, Abdulla! (*The children rise*.) What made you call so shrill, Fatima?

Fatima. I fear to tell. Father will not be home to-night—he is gone———

Zeeba. Not home to-night! How can you know that, my child?

Fatima. I went to meet him—it was so late At a distance I beheld him surrounded by a great many men, and the Reis made him mount a camel and carried him off.

Zeeba. You alarm me! But what next?

Fatima. Why I met Gusraf, who was sent to tell you not to expect Abdulla to-night. I am sure he has gone to prison. (She cries and sobs.)

Zeeba. Alas! alas! we must follow. If he be in prison he will be happier if we only rest near the walls. But how can my good, pious husband have given offence? He never injured any human being! Let us prepare, my children, for our journey. Take with us all our store; he may need it.

Fatima. What presents shall I take? I have a dove and some roses that the Reis gave me. The Bendemeer roses, which were the brightest at the last feast.

Yusuph. And I have some Busrah dates, and figs, and walnuts of the mountains—I will take them.

Zeeba. Do, my darlings! The value of gifts is nothing compared to the good feeling which prompts the gift, as your good father says. We must pack up our little worldly goods and take food for our journey. We will leave at the shrine of Mehdee the fifth part of our store, and then proceed to Mesched. May the Power that has watched over my dear Abdulla, still protect him and his, and relieve him from his bonds! Innocence and truth have ever been his handmaids; may they serve to break his chains! Alas, alas! Come, my children, let us turn our thoughts to Mecca, and then to sleep.

[Exeunt.

SCENE II.—Outside the Palace Gates at Ispahan.

Enter Zeeba, Fatima, and Yusuph. Zeeba
bearing packages; Fatima with a basket of roses
and a basket with a dove; Yusuph with a basket
containing fruit. They seem weary, worn, and unhappy. Two Turkish Soldiers guard the gates.

Zeeba (to one of the Soldiers). Is this the seruglio of the Commander of the Faithful,

Shah Abbas the Great? (The Centinel shakes his head.) He hears not! (She turns to the other.) Is this the dwelling of Shah Abbas, King of Persia? (Second Sentinel shakes his head.) Oh Fatima, they cannot understand our language! What will befall us? (FATIMA and YUSUPH put down their baskets and begin to weep aloud.) Cheer up, my children, we are not quite desolate. If Abdulla lives, he still loves us, and he has need of all our courage. (YUSUPH wipes FATIMA's eyes and she consoles YUSUPH.)

Yusuph. Yes, dear mother, we will be brave.

[FAROON, the VIZIER, enters.

Faroon. What are you doing here, good woman, so near the gates of the seraglio? Cloud not the sun of our prosperity, nor corrupt the pure air of the place where the Commander of the Faithful breathes.

Zeeba. Thank heaven and the blessed Prophet for those words! Our toilsome journey is then ended, and the faithful will find a friend.

Fatima. We wish to see the King. I have some roses for him.

Faroon. Why, child, do you think that the

seraglio gardens cannot furnish better roses than those? Take them away!

Yusuph. I too want to see the King. I have some fruit for him. I have dried figs from Sinjar and raisins from Amadijah.

Vizier. Well, that is something like! my mouth waters when I hear of Sinjar figs. To-day the King can see no stranger: it is a great jubilee. He is entertaining his whole court.

Zeeba. 'Tis impossible he can rejoice to-day: he has put my husband in prison!

Vizier. Ah, my good woman, you know nothing of our ways here in Ispahan. Why, we like to put people in prison if they do mischief when they have their liberty; and if you don't be off, that's what will be done with you.

Fatima. But mother is good and father too.

Yusuph. Every body says that father is as good as the sun in heaven, and mother as good as the moon.

Vizier. And that you are little stars, I suppose? at all events thou art a bright fellow.

Yusuph (aside to Fatima). What does he mean?

Fatima. I do not know, but he is very grand. (Looking at his dress.)

Vizier. Look ye, good woman; yesterday the King had riches brought unto him, which had long lain undiscovered and buried in the earth—treasures which belonged to the great Khoosroo.*—He obtained them by the skill and honesty of a poor peasant. This honest fellow took them to the Reis of his district, who brought them all with the man to Ispahan. Our noble King has given a public holiday, and he means to reward the poor man who found the treasure.

Zeeba. Alas! alas! sorrow comes to me as a cloud in sunshine! And will he not set Abdulla free on such a day as this?

Vizier. Abdulla, do you mean, who came from beyond Mesched?

Zeeba.
Fatima.
Yusuph.
Yusuph.

Faroon (hesitating). He will keep Abdulla safe.

Zeeba. Oh merciful Vizier, tell him that I am

the wife of Abdulla; that my husband was carried off to prison for no crime; and that he is so good that our Reis calls him the pious peasant.

Faroon. Does your husband work for the Reis Merooka?

Zeeba. Truly he has and is beloved by him, and he has just made Abdulla an overseer!

Faroon. You believe, then, that Abdulla has been put in prison? (I see their error. Aside.)

Zeeba. Not justly, I am sure. Abdulla could never do wrong. As soon would the crystal spring of Zemzem flow in muddy streams, as the lips of Abdulla pour forth falsehood.

Faroon. (Poor woman! how I shall enjoy her great surprise! Aside. To Zeeba.)—I will take pity on you, and will conduct you to the prison in which Abdulla is confined. On this day of rejoicing the King will be merciful and generous. He is in a happy mood—his smile will melt prison bars. Come along, little stars. (To FATIMA and YUSUPH.)

Zeeba.
Fatima.
Yusuph.
Thanks, oh noble Vizier!
[Exeunt.

SCENE III.—A Chamber in the Palace, the King seated on his throne; Attendants about him, and Guests at side-tables. Faroon enters with Zeeba, Fatima, and Yusuph, who stand aside, gazing with fear and wonder.

Shah Abbas (to Faroon). You have some favour to ask, I perceive, Faroon. A King is ever ready to grant what a just Vizier dares to ask.

Faroon (to ZEEBA and her Children). Now advance. (He bows to the King. ZEEBA, FATIMA, and YUSUPH advance and kneel before the King.)

Zeeba. Mercy, great King, for my beloved husband!

Shah Abbas. Who is your husband, good woman; and where is he?

Zeeba. My beloved husband lies in prison: he has been carried from his home for your good pleasure. Release him, or let me die in prison beside him!

The King (to his attendants). What means all this?

Faroon (approaches the and King gives him

a scroll to read). May it please the Commander of the Faithful to read this.

King. To-day, Faroon, I can deny you nothing. (The King takes the paper and reads. To Zerba.)—I am now informed of your husband's conduct. What can you say in his defence?

Zeeba. Can I tell you of good deeds which are as countless as the sands of the desert? Can I tell you of his truth, which is as pure and strong as light? His industry knows no rest but when he sleeps. Can I tell you of his piety? He hears no muezzin; but the sun's rise, the sun's height, and the sun's decline find him at his prayers, with his face towards Mecca. If it were not for his goodness I could not thus stand before a mighty monarch and speak my husband's praise, instead of being dumb with shame and sorrow. He has taught me and my children to fear nothing but sin. Pardon! Oh, pardon your slave!

King. I forgive thy zeal; but how comes it that Abdulla has not clothed you more daintily?

Zeeba. Truly am I clothed in my husband's good deeds. Our worthy Reis gave him twenty piasters on the day his service ended. Abdulla

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went to Mesched. He brought me back no vest; no golden slippers for Fatima; no gentle mule for Yusuph; but his return gave gladness to our hearts. He gave his gifts in secret, as our blessed Prophet hath ordained.

King. If I cannot release Abdulla, what gift shall I bestow on you and your children?

Zeeba. None! Oh, none can supply his place! Not all the gems of Golconda could satisfy the heart of his wretched widow! Ashes and tears will be her meat and drink.

Fatima and Yusuph. Nobody but father can make us happy, most mighty King!

King (to his attendants). Command Abdulla to my presence! (Two officers exeunt. Zeeba leans on her children's shoulders, on the right hand of the King; Abdulla enters on the left. Zeeba rushes forward, but she stops when she beholds a man sumptuously clothed. The children remain struck with astonishment, their hands raised.)

Abdulla. Not know me, Zeeba? (Zeeba runs into his arms, and faints.) Come, come! awake to joy! (Fatima clings to her mother; Yusuph to his father.)



King. Zeeba, listen to your King! Let me tell you, and all here present, that to your good husband I owe a debt of gratitude, greater than to any one in my kingdom. Learn, then, that Abdulla has found treasures near his dwelling, which have lain concealed for centuries. Untempted by the gold and jewels, he carried them to the Reis; they then loaded their camels, and conveyed them safe to Ispahan. My palace has been his only prison! What reward do you ask for now? Speak boldly, good woman!

Zeeba. Commander of the Faithful, I ask no more than permission to return to my home, and to take Abdulla with me, and there remain in peace.

King. And for your children—have you nothing to ask for? (ZEEBA turns to her children.)

Zeeba. Speak, children, for yourselves!

Fatima. Please, great King, I should like a dress for mother like this. (Taking hold of ABDULLA's robe.)

Yusuph. And I should like a great camel for father, and a little mule for myself.

King. All that, and more shall you have. Truth and honesty I cannot purchase, and they

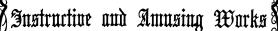
are their own reward; but I must employ so good a man as Abdulla to help me take care of my people. I appoint him Reis of the district around Mesched. (To his VIZIER.) And, Faroon, let it be recorded in our archives, that the most glorious event of my reign was brought about by Abdulla, the Pious Peasant of Khorassan!

CHORUS.

God save the King!

God save great Shah Abbas! Long live our mighty King! &c.

THE END.



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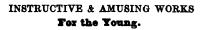
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